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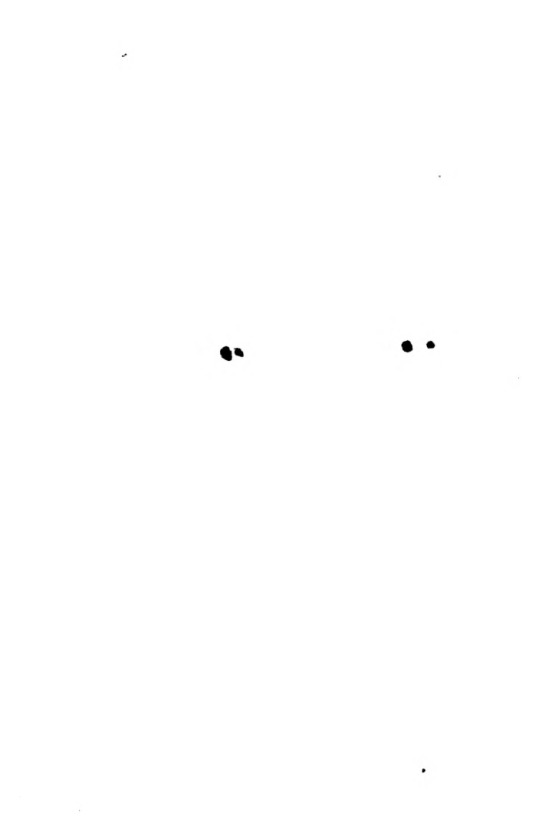
MISS V. V. HUNTER
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CONVERSATIONS

ON

SANCTIFICATION;

FOR

THE USE OF THOSE

WHO ARE

SEEKING FULL SALVATION.

BY REV. J. S. PIPE,

MEMBER OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE, ENGLAND.

FIFTH AMERICAN
FROM THE EIGHTH LONDON EDITION.

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"As He is, so are we in this world."—I JOHN iv. 17.  
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CONVERSATION

BETWEEN

A PREACHER AND AN ENLIGHTENED
HEARER.

Hearer. SIR, may I ask you a few questions concerning Religion ?

Preacher. Certainly, as many as you please ; and I am glad that you begin to make such inquiries.

H. It is high time I did ; for I confess that I have been too careless and indifferent about my spiritual concerns. I have not been what God requires, but hope soon to be in a better state.

P. This is very well ; and God has promised, "If the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return to him, that he will have mercy upon him, and *abundantly* pardon him." (Isaiah lv. 7.)

H. This is one of the things I wanted to know,—whether, after all my sins, I can hope for forgiveness from God ? You have, however, satisfied my doubts on that head, by the Scripture you have mentioned.

P. However numerous, great, and aggravated the sins of men may be ; or how long soever they may have persisted in them ; or

how unprofitable and unworthy they may be in the sight of Heaven, if they forsake them and come to Jesus Christ, he says he "will in no wise cast them out." (John vi. 37.)

H. This is encouraging. But will not some think, that this is like giving a license to sin; for if men may be forgiven, do as they please, will they not sin the more?

P. There may be such vile persons, who say, "Let us sin that grace may abound;" but such are in a most awful state and must be left to their righteous Judge. This is far from being my meaning: and the cause of your remark seems to be, that you think I am only speaking of the worst characters among men, when the truth is, that what I have said is more or less applicable to all; which, I think may be made clearly to appear.

H. That we may be worse in the sight of God than we imagine, may be true; for there are doubtless many sins committed which are forgotten; and many things may be sinful which we do not consider as such; and our self love makes us gloss over many things which are not right before Him that tries the heart.

P. True: there is much more of this in the world than men are aware of, and this is one reason of their looking only to the more enormous offences; and hence conclude that there is much less sin in the earth than God's word declares.

H. How shall I come to the true know-

ledge of this business ? How shall I see into “the exceeding sinfulness of sin ?”

P. By the law of God contained in the Ten Commandments.

This is the glass which shows the present weak, sinful, and imperfect state of man. Here shines the glorious perfections of God especially his greatness in commanding, his wisdom in appointing, and his justice in insisting on these rules of righteousness to his rational creatures. In this moral law, which is holy, just, and good, we behold his unspotted holiness, and transcendant excellency ; and how impossible it is to break this law, and not forfeit his favour.

It is by this law, brought home to the conscience by the Spirit of God, that sinners discover their true state of mind, “for by the law is the knowledge of sin ;” and by the law they read their condemnation, “for the law worketh wrath ;” and being once broken, righteousness can never come by it to any soul ; for “he that offends in one point” is considered as being “guilty of all ;” and hence it can save none : but through the divine mercy it is used with other means as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we may be “justified by faith ;” for “if righteousness came by the law then Christ died in vain.” But who will affirm this ? Who will say he died in vain ? No : our salvation is wholly through him ; and to him we must have recourse, or perish eternally.

Let me now present you with this law for

this purpose; not to set you upon keeping it for your justification; but, first, as a means of convincing you of sin; and, secondly, as a rule of life for you to walk by, when you have obtained mercy of the Lord, and as that standard by which God will judge the world. (Rom. ii. 12.)

First Command. “Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.”

God, the glorious maker and supporter of all things, by whose providence we are sustained, and by whose grace we are redeemed, is the only God we should acknowledge and worship; he alone is to be feared, loved, honoured, and obeyed; and all other beings, in heaven, earth, or hell, are to be considered as nothing, and totally disregarded, in comparison with him. And the worship we pay him must not be dead, formal, and hypocritical; but sincere, fervent, spiritual, grateful, and such as he requires in his holy word. All, therefore, who forget, neglect, despise, and hate him; all who forsake his ordinances, and refuse to pray to him, to praise and love him; all who offer him mere lip-service, and draw near to him in person, while their hearts are far from him; all who neglect to read or hear his holy word, that they may know his will and do it; and all who do not give their hearts to him, are breakers of this first commandment. And now I leave you to judge whether you are guilty or not guilty.

Second Command. “Thou shalt not make

to thyself any graven image, or the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and show mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

This commandment forbids all kinds of idolatry, or the worshipping of the true and living God in an erroneous manner. It also forbids the substituting of the creature or created things in the place of the great Creator, seeking our happiness in them instead of him, or in any thing which stands in opposition to him. Whatever is loved, feared, obeyed, followed, and imitated more than God, is to us an idol; that is our god. All inordinate affection places us in the same state. Thus the covetous man makes a god of his wealth; the ambitious man of his honours; and the voluptuous man, of his pleasures and sensual gratifications; all which is contrary to the love of God, and to that worship and obedience which are due to him, and which are paid him by his servants; and brings his displeasure down upon such as hate him, and upon their offspring who tread in their steps, to the third and fourth generation.

This commandment also forbids the broaching of human doctrines, creeds, and

ceremonies, as coming from God; of all superstitious services, fanatic devotion, cruel rites, and formal and hypocritical services: for God is a jealous God and all attempts to impose upon or deceive him are vain and impious. He requires our hearts; and if we refuse to offer them to him, whatever else we place them upon is idolatry and wickedness in His sight, who sees and knows us altogether. Now think: are you guilty or not guilty?

Third Command. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

This commandment not only forbids the light and irreverent use of any of the names by which God has revealed himself to us in his holy word; but all trifling with his nature, perfections, service, and government. There are some who, upon any surprise, will exclaim, in an impious way, "Good Lord!" "Lord, bless us!" "Lord Jesus!" "God have mercy!" &c. Others will awfully swear by him, both in their mirth and malice; and wish the bitterest wishes to themselves if they do, or do not, act thus or thus, which they think no more of nor perhaps ever intended. Others will blaspheme God himself, or call upon him to exert his vengeance, to curse either persons or things which have displeased them, in defiance of that word, "Bless, and curse not." There are those also who will ridicule the exercises of piety, and those that engage in them by the divine command.

But all such as do these things should remember, that He who sees, hears, and knows all things, will bring them to a strict account. Do you here plead guilty or not guilty?

Fourth Command. "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

This commandment forbids the profanation of the Lord's day in the most solemn manner. If you should ask how this day is profaned, it is answered, By not remembering its institution, its design, its importance, and its superior excellence, when compared with that portion of our time which is dedicated to secular purposes. (Isai. lviii. 13, 14.) By spending it in worldly concerns; buying, selling, labouring, unnecessary travels or visits; or in idleness, neglecting the worship and service of God; in feasting, revelling, gaming, or riot; and, in short, doing any thing which may and ought to be done on working days, or neglecting to perform those services of piety and mercy which that day requires. Have you been or are

you guilty of the breach of this commandment?

Fifth Command. "Honour thy father and mother: that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

By this commandment we learn that it is the duty of children to pay all due respect to their parents, and to manifest it by the most genuine expressions of affection and liberality; avoiding stubbornness, self-will, and all unkind and ungrateful speeches and behaviour: and as all who are placed over us in the order of Providence, whether ministers, magistrates, or masters, are in a sense parents, or at least ought so to be, it is incumbent upon us to fill up the duties of our several stations with fidelity, submission, and diligence: especially we ought to love and respect those ministers who are placed over us in the Lord, and esteem them highly in love for their work's sake.

It is admitted that it is equally the duty of superiors to perform their respective services towards such as are placed under them: and if they do them not, they must give a strict account to him who is the Lord of all. The blessing of heaven is, in this command, promised to the obedient. Ask yourself, then, whether this commandment has been carefully and religiously observed by you or not.

Sixth Command. "Thou shalt do no murder."

This commandment forbids every kind of

murder whatever ; whether it be committed out of revenge, covetousness, pride, or lust. Murder is a dreadful sin, highly provoking to God, shocking to human nature, and fills the consciences of the bloody wretches who are guilty of it with the most bitter remorse and terrifying accusations. Self-murder is, if possible, more shocking ; because it not only is such an opposition to God, and so perfectly unnatural in itself, but so completely excludes the possibility of repentance, as to make eternal perdition inevitable.—Whatever, therefore, tends to murder ; whether anger, malice, excessive self-love, ambition, extravagance, distrust of God's providence, or any other cause, must be considered as a breach of this law ; and were we to speak of the neglect of the soul, and the sins consequent upon it, I know not but this soul-murder may also be intended amongst the rest. Here, then, pause, and say how far you have, in heart and design, been a breaker of this divine law.

Seventh Command. “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

This commandment forbids all sinful intercourse between the sexes, either in a married or single state ; all kinds of whoredom, lewdness, and impurity of the heart or senses : premeditated or sudden, secret or open, of our own contrivance or that of others. It enjoins chastity upon all, and an opposition to every word, person, place, or thought that would infringe upon it. It is

only known to God, and to the offenders themselves how often and in how many ways this law is violated! The Apostle says, it is a shame even to speak of these abominations. Now, I leave you to judge, if the heart is concerned in this matter, how oft you have transgressed this command.

Eighth Command. "Thou shalt not steal."

As no man possesses any right, human or divine, to take away my character, property, or person, without my consent; so neither have I any right to take away his: if either I or he do this, then the offending party breaks this righteous commandment. This law also forbids injustice in all its forms and bearings: unjust transactions in business; unjust lawsuits; unjust accounts, weights, and measures; and all imposition upon the ignorant and unwary; all pilfering and knavery; all extortion and over-reaching; all borrowing with an intention to deceive; unfaithfulness in servitude; and cruel neglect and defrauding in masters towards the persons they employ;—all these, and such like things, as well as avowed felony and robbery, are here forbidden. To which may be added, the keeping back the heart from God, and neglecting to offer those praises, and perform those services, which are due to the Divine Majesty. (Mal. iii. 8, 9.) Examine yourself whether you are clear. Guilty or not guilty?

Ninth Command. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

This commandment forbids all false depositions which any man may bring against another to his injury, either in a Court of Justice or elsewhere. Perjury, lying, and deceit, are hateful both to God and man. Whoever is guilty of them stamps his character with disgrace and infamy. All backbiting, slander, and evil-speaking, in a more private way, are of the same family, and are condemned by the same law. O! how oft is the tongue employed in opposition to the heart and to known truth! How often may it be said of the tongues of many, that they are "set on fire of hell," by the mischief they produce! Put this question to your heart, Have I never been guilty, from fear, or shame, or covetousness, of uttering falsehood? Or this, Have I never brought an unjust accusation against another, or never aimed at misrepresentations to his prejudice? Am I, in this respect, altogether clear?

Tenth Command. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his."

This commandment condemns all discontent and dissatisfaction in the situation in which Providence has placed us; it also forbids all envy at others' possessions or prosperity, with all unjust and unworthy attempts to raise ourselves by effecting their downfall. It forbids all inordinate self-love, and all

those passions and desires which would lead us to take to ourselves what of right and justice, belongs to another. Covetousness is idolatry, and the chief spring of all the injustice and deceit that is in the world ; and, it might be added, of its miseries also. Here then you may examine yourself, and know whether your heart has ever gone astray, and whether in this respect you are guilty or not guilty before a heart-searching God.

H. Alas ! I confess myself a guilty sinner before God. I have broken this holy law, and exposed myself to its curse and condemnation : and if I cannot be saved by conforming in future to its precepts, on what ground can I hope to be saved ?

P. The goodness of God must be the ground of your hope. Thus the Psalmist prayed when distressed on account of his sins, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions ; according to thy mercy, remember thou me for thy GOODNESS' sake, O Lord." (Psal. xxv. 7.) And then it is added, "Good and upright is the Lord : therefore will he teach sinners in the way." (Ver. 8.)

H. This is encouraging : but how shal. I know that God is good, and how will he make known to me his goodness ?

P. God is good in himself, and he shows himself good in his works of nature, providence, and grace.

H. How is he good in his works of nature ?

P. As God is the fountain of goodness, nothing but good, or what is perfectly consistent with goodness, can come from him. When at first, by his infinite power and wisdom, he formed the heavens and the earth, he (and he cannot err) pronounced all to be good. If there are now many evils found among his works, they arise solely from man's disobedience, and are to be considered as the chastisements of our offended Lawgiver and sovereign Judge; as the sacred writer informs us, that God said to the first offending man, "Cursed is the ground for THY SAKE:" (Gen. iii. 17 :) and thus you see that sin, by entering the world, has brought with it pain, and misery, and death.

Yet after all the evils sin has brought upon us, there are yet many glorious displays of the divine goodness. Lift up your eyes, and behold the wide expanse of heaven, and meditate upon the earth on which you tread. Consider the number, order, distances, uses, and magnitude of the heavenly bodies. Look at the glorious luminary which makes our day, that discovers to us the beauties of creation, that warms the cold ground, and draws from its fruitful bosom the comforts and conveniences of life. Observe, attentively, the moon "walking in brightness," cheering the gloom of night, and, by its perpetual change, reminding us of the lapse of time. See how admirably one object is suited to and connected with another. Reflect upon the various elements, with the nature,

form, and food of their numerous inhabitants. View the sea, that world of waters and of wonders, where myriads of living creatures have their abode; and the air and earth swarming with insects, birds, and animals; consider these things, and the manner in which their respective species are preserved, and their wants supplied, and you will be ready to exclaim with the Psalmist, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." Such meditations as these are calculated to melt, expand, and delight the soul; and to fill it with gratitude and unutterable sentiments while tracing out the wisdom and goodness of God.

He is truly great in all his works, but on man he has bestowed peculiar care, and all the powers and faculties of our nature should be consecrated to him. "He made us, and not we ourselves;" and the more we know of our frame, the more we shall be constrained to acknowledge "how fearfully and wonderfully we are made." How various, useful, and necessary are the several members of our bodies! The senses, how exquisitely formed, how wisely and elegantly placed! What strength and firmness are given to the bones! What readiness, elasticity, and power to the muscles; and what delicate sensibility to the nerves! What a surprising fitness of the several parts for the purposes intended! With what rapidity does the crimson current continue its course!

With what silence and secrecy do the different glands perform their respective secretions; and with what more than chemical art are the animal juices separated, concocted, and dispersed to every part of the body, for the purposes of health, comfort, and stability!

Nor is the mind less wonderful. How little do we understand of its nature and essential properties! its vast capacities! or manner of acting upon the bodily organs! How extraordinary its self-determining power, its perceptions, judgments, recollection, and diversity of thought? How high its character, made after the similitude of God,—his vicegerent in this lower world, for the harmony of the whole system; and intended for the enjoyment of consummate and endless felicity in a future state! Is he then not good in these respects?

H. I am constrained to acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of God in these things; but wish for a view of them in his superintending care and providence.

P. These are not less discernible in his providential dispensations. But as there are those who shut their eyes, and will not see his hand in the works of nature, refusing to acknowledge his power and Godhead there, we may suppose that such persons will form the same notions of his wise and righteous government. But they greatly err.

He it is that upholds all things by the

word of his power, and incessantly renews the face of creation. He numbers and preserves the particles of each; the drops of water; the minute globules of air; and the still smaller but active rays of light. He bridles the fury of the winds and waves; bounds the severity of the frost; and checks the raging and devouring fire. His whispers calm the tempestuous ocean; he directs the flaming bolts, shot from contending clouds, and pours through the vault of heaven, in successive peals, the majestic thunder. He causes the seasons of the year to know his voice, and run their regular but diversified race. In *winter*, he opens the magazines of cold, spreads his snow over the face of nature, congeals the standing lake, and arrests the course of the murmuring waters; yet preserves life, and fertilizes the ground for the approaching *spring*, when, by the cheering beams of the returning sun, he spreads beauty, vigour, and the flattering prospects of the fruitful year, through nature's realms. Creation wakes at his mild command; and the springing of the verdant grass, the charming music of the groves, the rustling of the quivering leaves, the diversified scenery of wild and cultivated shrubs and flowers; the whole of this enchanting and reanimating season is by his appointment. This ushers in the fruitful *summer*, when he causes the boughs to hang with delicious fruit, and the fertile fields and gardens to pour forth, in rich abundance, their

vegetable stores. He visiteth the earth and watereth it; he greatly enricheth it with the river of God, which is full of water: he prepareth us corn when he hath so provided for it. He watereth the ridges thereof abundantly, and setteth the furrows thereof; he maketh it soft with showers, he blesseth the springing thereof: his paths drop fatness upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn, they shout for joy. (Psal. lxxv.) *Autumn* then succeeds, which ripens and prepares the precious fruits of the earth for the sustenance of man and beast. Thus he multiplies his favours without grudging, and "daily loadeth us with benefits." He crowns the year with his goodness, and fills our hearts with food and gladness, while millions of inferior beings, in fulfilling the laws of their nature, imperfectly honour him for his unbounded liberality. Thus you see that the Lord is good.

H. He is good: O that I might offend him no more!

P. Let us now endeavour to trace his goodness in our redemption. His works of grace are set forth in the Gospel in the clearest and richest manner. There we behold "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." There we see the evil nature of sin; the guiltiness of offending man: his condemna-

tion by the holy law of God; his wretchedness, misery, helplessness, and liability to endless perdition. There is set forth the goodness of God, in giving his well-beloved Son to be our instructor in righteousness; our example of holy walking with God; and the great atoning sacrifice for our sins, that we might not perish, but have eternal life. There the great benefits arising from his passion and death are revealed, and the means also by which they are conveyed to penitent sinners. There the most awful threatenings are denounced against those who continue in disobedience and impenitency, that they shall be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" and the most gracious promises to those who will accept his mercy and salvation: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There are laid open to us the solemn realities of a future state of rewards to the righteous, and of punishments to the wicked. He "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil: for there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. ii. 6, &c.) Yet all things discover the goodness of

God: the more dreadful are intended to awe, restrain, and save, and the others to charm, to draw, and to redeem.

H. These are very solemn things. What, then, must I do to be saved? How must I shun the pit of hell, and gain an admittance into the kingdom of heaven? I see and acknowledge that God is good; but how can he be good to me? How can he pardon and save unholy me?

P. There is certainly a way made for you to escape; and if you are willing to walk in that way, you will be saved. In order to this, there are some things necessary for you to *know*; some things for you to *avoid*; some for you to *experience*; some for you to *practise*; and some things for you to *suffer*.

H. What are the things I must know?

P. 1. You must know God, that he is an infinite, eternal Spirit, filling all places with his presence; that he is wise, holy, just, merciful, and true; that he has revealed himself to us, under three distinct characters, in the same nature and Godhead,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that he made all things for his glory, and that the happiness of his creatures arises from their walking in the ways marked out by his infinite wisdom and goodness.

2. That God entered into covenant with man in a state of innocency; the conditions of which were, that he should offer to his God sincere, constant, perfect, loving, and

lasting obedience: in the performance of which, he was entitled to immortality and eternal happiness; but subject to death on his opposition to or non-fulfilment of these engagements.

3. That man violated this covenant of his God, and reduced himself and posterity to such a state of sin and weakness, as rendered it impossible for either him or them to fulfil its conditions, and consequently all were condemned to everlasting destruction, being unable to observe the before-mentioned conditions, or of offering to the offended and insulted Majesty of heaven an equivalent for the obedience they owed to him and his holy law.

4. That God, full of tender mercy and compassion, did, of his own goodness, freely make a new covenant with guilty man, making his beloved Son the grand surety thereof; and did accept of his sufferings and death as more than an equivalent for human obedience under the first covenant; and has promised life and salvation to all who "truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel."

5. That it is therefore vain to seek salvation by the deeds of the law; for the law, as hinted before, cannot justify. (Acts xiii. 39.) We shall be judged by it; (Rom. ii. 12;) but "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified; for by the law is the *knowledge of sin*;" (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16;) and "the law *worketh wrath*, for where no law is, there

is no transgression." (Rom. iv. 15.) That, therefore, by which we are to be judged cannot justify us; that which discovers to us our numerous transgressions, extending even to the thoughts, (Rom. vii. 7,) cannot acquit us; and that which *works wrath* can never bring salvation to our souls.

6. You must then understand that salvation is of grace; that is of the free mercy and goodness of God, and cannot therefore be merited by us. It must be received as a free gift, or not at all. Whoever, conscious of his lost state, and humbled for his past transgressions, willingly accepts the Lord Jesus Christ in his various offices, and gives himself up to the service of God through him, "his faith is imputed to him for righteousness;" he receives the Holy Spirit as a spirit of adoption, and is empowered to walk as it becometh the gospel. Happy in himself, and ascribing his salvation to God alone, he rejoices in hope of everlasting glory, and goes on his way in the true spirit of gratitude, love, and obedience.

II. What are the things I must avoid?

P. 1. As the great end for which Christ came into the world was to save us from our sins, all who would partake of his salvation must give up the service of sin, or they will seek after it in vain. "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin." (Ezek. xviii. 30.) This includes all kinds of wickedness, profaneness, deceit, treachery, intem-

perance, lewdness, wrath, strife, and malice ; and whatever is contrary to the Gospel, dishonourable to God, hurtful to others, or dangerous to ourselves.

2. We must avoid all those persons, places, and things which would tempt us, and either lead us farther into sin, or prevent us from flying from it. " Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it ; turn from it, and pass away." (Prov. iv. 14, 15.) " If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." (Prov. i. 10.) This may subject you to some trouble, inconvenience, or ridicule : but no matter ; God has spoken, and must be obeyed rather than men. " Come out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing," says he, " and I will receive you."

3. All sinful recreations must be avoided. These only tend to corrupt the heart, and turn it from God and his holy ways. How abominable in the sight of a merciful God must those cruel sports be to which many are addicted ; such as cock-fighting, bull-baiting, horse-racing, and such like ! And what better are games of chance, card-playing, indecent dancing, theatrical representations, and many others ? They are calculated only to please a vain and unbridled fancy, or to bring into exercise the basest passions of our fallen nature. They cannot be used in the name of the Lord, neither do they tend to his glory ; and what cannot be thus used, must, if we would enjoy his

favour, be set aside and entirely forsaken. According to the Scriptures, they that live in pleasure are dead while they live; (1 Tim. v. 6;) and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God are ranked among the vilest characters. (2. Tim. iii. 4.)

4. Prejudice against religious persons and their profession must be *set aside*. That some have taken up the profession of religion on unscriptural and hypocritical grounds, I pretend not to deny; "for they are not all Israel which are of Israel." But it does not follow, because some have acted deceitfully, that all professors do the same; nor does it follow that religion itself is bad, because some, under a pretended regard for it, have violated its precepts. Do not then suffer the bad impressions which have from any cause been made upon your heart, and especially from the lying and scandalous reports which have been or are still spread abroad to the prejudice of religion, or its sincere professors, remain there: on the contrary, think what a mercy it is, when wickedness so greatly abounds, that there are a few to stem the torrent; and let them have your affection and esteem. Our Saviour commands us to love one another; and without it we cannot be his disciples. Nathaniel, that truly upright character, once doubted whether any good thing could come from Nazareth; but was convinced of his error, when he found that the blessed Jesus came from thence. Endeavour then to

learn wisdom and candour from this pious Israelite.

5. Avoid excuses and delays. Some think that it is not required of them to be religious, because they are poor, afflicted, have a bad trade, a large family, and many worldly cares; or if they must turn to God, it must be when they are older, when this or that person dies, when things are better, or some such like excuses. But remember there are persons in these trying circumstances who love and fear God; and if others can thus be religious, so may all. Besides, as without holiness *no man* can see the Lord, all such excuses are vain; and since life is so uncertain, all delays are dangerous. I hope these do not much apply to you; but if they do, come to a resolution, in the strength of divine grace, to give up yourself to the service of God immediately.

6. Avoid all self-righteousness. As our salvation is of grace, we must never think of bringing a price in our hand to pay for it: the idea therefore of our being forgiven and accepted for our goodness is both unscriptural and hurtful. Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Do not then imagine that any righteousness of your own will justify you before God; for it cannot. To attempt covering yourself with this would be folly. You might as well aim to cover, defend, and ornament your body with a spider's web. Cast away, therefore all confidence in yourself, and put your

trust wholly in the Saviour's merits, and you will find acceptance, and be assisted by his Spirit for every good word and every good work.

H. What are the things I must experience ?

P. 1. It is necessary that you experience true contrition of soul before God, on account of your sins ; which implies a deep sense of your vileness in the sight of a holy God ; self-abasement, humbled as unto the dust at his compassions and your own ingratitude ; unfeigned sorrow for your misspent time, foolishness, and impieties ; sincere confessions of your wanderings and imperfections ; a determination, by divine grace, to forsake every false way, and give yourself to him ; and a renunciation of every other plea for mercy in the sight of your offended heavenly Father, but the precious blood of Christ, as the Lamb of God slain for guilty men. When you feel this genuine sorrow, you are not far from the kingdom of God.

2. You must have the " knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sin." The language of Jesus to the truly penitent is, " I will give to him that is athirst, of the water of life freely." If you then are troubled on account of your sins, and are weighed down with the burden of iniquity and guilty fears, and are thirsting for salvation ; when Jesus imparts to you this living water, and gives you rest by writing forgiveness on your heart, you will be as conscious of it as you are of ease after pain, or rest after excessive

fatigue and labour. When he makes his goodness pass before you, and proclaims himself, "the Lord God, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin," then you will be enabled to say, "O Lord, I will praise thee; for though thou wast angry with me, thy anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." Then, being justified freely, you will have peace with God; the "kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy," will be set up in your heart; you will "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," while the "seasons of refreshing" will come from his gracious presence, and "fill you with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Thus God will make you truly happy; and by these marks you will know that "there is now no condemnation" to you; and that you are assuredly "passed from death unto life."

3. You must know your admission into the family of God. All who receive the Lord Jesus are adopted into this family; as the Scriptures say, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;"—and "because they are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father;"—and again, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." Thus, "though they were without Christ,—having no hope, and without God in the world,"—they "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of

God." 'These things you must know for yourself, that you may trust in the Lord without being moved by any storm from any quarter, and may have his joy fulfilled in yourself. Some of the sweetest moments the Christian spends on this side death are those in which, assisted by the Holy Spirit, and persuaded of his acceptance in Christ, he can gratefully and confidently say, "My Father! My Father!" This is happiness indeed.

4. You must become holy in the sight of the Lord. Old things must pass away, and all things must become new. (2 Cor. v. 17.) As you stand in an entirely new relation to God, it is expected that your heart should be made anew, that you may please him in all your ways. And he has promised that he will sprinkle clean water upon you, and make you clean; and from this inward purity all your actions must flow. Both your principles and practice must be according to his will. Your company, pleasures, pursuits, tempers, words, and conversation in general, must be pure; the necessity of which will more fully appear as you obtain a clearer view of the nature of God and his holy law, and are brought to meditate upon the order, harmony, and holiness of heaven. In a word, he says, "Be you holy, for I am holy;" and declares, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

II. What are the things I must practise?

P. 1. As you have sinned against God,

you must repent of your sins, for "God commandeth all men every where to repent." If you wish to know what is meant by repentance,—it is such a *sight* and *sense* of the evil of sin, as leads you to loathe both it and yourself in the presence of God, for having been guilty of it, attended by such unfeigned humiliation and contrition of spirit as constrain you to *confess* its evil, and to *forsake* it altogether. In short, it is turning from the service of sin to the service of God, without reserve; acknowledging our own unworthiness, and the divine goodness in sparing us; and earnestly seeking mercy at his hands, that we may not perish everlastingly.

2. You are required to believe in the Lord Jesus for salvation. By this faith you are not to understand the bare assent of the mind to a given truth. It is more: it is receiving Christ as he is set forth in the Gospel; as our WISDOM, to enlighten our minds with divine knowledge; as our RIGHTEOUSNESS, that we may be "justified freely, through the redemption that is in him, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" as our SANCTIFICATION, through whose Spirit we are made holy, and assisted to perform all the good pleasure of God: as our REDEMPTION, placing no dependance upon ourselves, but looking to him to save us from

sin, and wrath, and hell, and to bring us at last to his eternal kingdom and glory. Thus you are to plead the merit of his atoning sacrifice, and rely upon his intercession at the right hand of God, and confidently look up for mercy in his name, till he fills your soul with joy and gladness through believing, and crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Then you will be truly happy, your sorrow will be turned into joy, and you will be clothed with the "garments of praise and salvation."

3. It will now be necessary for you to attend all his ordinances. Though you may be only a poor labourer or mechanic, and have not much time on your hand, yet you should find opportunity, twice a day at least, to spend a little while in secret prayer, meditation, and thanksgiving before God. You should contrive, morning and evening, to call your family together for prayer; and if you could sing a hymn, and read a psalm, or some small portion of God's word, it would be better. You should also attend the holy Sacrament; drawing near to God with thankfulness to him for the gift of his beloved Son, and for all the benefits of his passion and death: and do not keep away, from groundless fears of eating and drinking condemnation; for that is impossible, if you sincerely desired to be saved through the Lord Jesus. Be careful to love and reverence the Lord's day; do nothing upon it of a servile nature, but what is quite necessary; spend it rather

in reading, instructing your family, attending public worship, or, if you have an opportunity for it, in works of love and mercy. Then your soul will be as a "well-watered garden," and you and yours will be blessed indeed.

4. You must also endeavour to promote his cause upon earth. A great part of mankind are yet far from God and righteousness; but the Christian world is beginning to awake out of its long slumber, and various societies are formed for the spread of divine knowledge among those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. If you can assist one, or more, or all of these, do it: if not, assist them by your prayers; and rejoice that God has cast your lot in such times, when there is such attention paid to the mental and moral improvement of mankind. Strive thus to live in a spirit of benevolence towards your fellow-creatures; overlook their failings as far as you can with a good conscience; forgive their trespasses; bear with their weakness; console them in their troubles; rejoice in their prosperity: and resolve, whatever they think or say of you, that you will never harbour any unkindness and revenge, but love and serve them for the sake of Him who lived and died and rose again for you. Such a spirit and temper cannot fail to promote the cause of piety.

5. You must seek the glory of God in all you do. You must not seek your own honour, but His. You must remember that you

are not your own, but are bought with a price, and should glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his property. Keep an eye to this in your family and connexions; in your particular calling; in your neighbourhood, and among your friends; in religious society, and in the world; in private and in public; so will you be preserved from going astray, and meet with the approbation of your Judge. Then your light will shine around you; and men, seeing your good works, will "glorify your Father which is in heaven," by giving themselves to his service, encouraged and animated by your pious and steady example.

H. What are the things I may be called to suffer?

P. 1 "As many as I love," said the Saviour, "I rebuke and chasten." This he does, or permits to be done, in various ways; and his design is to call forth the exercise of the various graces which his Spirit has planted in our souls, that we may know the truth of his work in us; that we may not be too closely united to this world; that we may distrust ourselves, and put all our confidence in him; and may ever be longing and preparing for that rest which remains for the people of God.

2. It may be your lot to be persecuted for righteousness' sake; your religious professions may be called in question; you may be considered in the light of a hypocrite and deceiver, and your name may be

cast out as evil, and your company despised: but hear the words of your gracious Saviour, whom the world hated, with all his grace, and excellences: "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven."—Whatever you suffer for God, in a truly Christian spirit, will be amply rewarded another day.

3. You may be called to suffer affliction of body; yet always remember, "the Lord does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men:" it is not for his pleasure, but for our profit; he sends these things, that we may be "partakers of his holiness." Let it, therefore, be your care to submit to the rod, without murmuring or repining and when he has tried you in his furnace, he will make you to shine as the pure gold.

4. You may meet with great trials in your family, or in the world; and may sometimes be ready, with the old Patriarch, to say, "All these things are against me;" when, as was his case, they may all ultimately tend to your advantage. This present life may be compared to the ocean; sometimes calm, and sometimes stormy, but never perfectly free from agitation: and it is in vain to expect constant repose when there are so many changes. Be not, however, discour-

aged. Divine Providence will continually watch over you; and as your day is, so your strength shall be; for there shall never be more laid upon you than you shall be assisted to bear.

5. You will have to suffer and sympathize with others. Your eyes will be open to see what dreadful havoc sin has made in the world; human distress will meet you in a thousand forms; and your feeling heart, whether you can mitigate that distress or not, will have many sighs on its account; and especially you will mourn to see so many hastening to perdition, by obstinately persevering in their sin and wickedness. But blessed are such mourners, and blessed such merciful characters; for they are the children of God, and theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Especially remember that you must die. No piety, however deep, no religion, however spiritual, can save from death. Dust we are, and to dust we must all return. Yet there is nothing dreadful in death to the real Christian. Its sting is drawn, and its terrors cease, on our acceptance in the Beloved; and it proves the gate of life, and of unmingled and eternal happiness, to the believer. Go on, then, keeping a conscience void of offence towards God and man; and when your heart and flesh fail, your God will be the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever.

II. I am thankful for your advice. I see

the way I am to take: may I be assisted by divine grace to walk therein, that I may find rest to my soul, and be happy in God for ever!

P. Watch your opportunities for prayer; confess all your past sins with true humility of soul; forgive all your enemies; and keep lifting up your heart to God for his mercy, till you can gratefully, feelingly, and confidently say, "Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee." Then you will find yourself in Christian liberty; and, devoting yourself to his blessed service, and walking according to the Gospel, you will be happy for ever.

CONVERSATIONS

BETWEEN

A PREACHER AND A BELIEVER.

"O thou who dost prefer, before all temples,
The upright heart and pure, inspire my breast!"
MILTON.

Preacher. BROTHER, I am glad to see you; I hope you are still mindful of the "one thing needful," and pressing forward to the "prize of" your "high calling."

Believer. I desire to bless God for his abundant mercy: I do possess the divine favour, and rejoice in his salvation.

P. I am thankful to hear it. We serve a good Master. We are blessed *now*; and by persevering in his ways, we shall be blessed *for ever*.

B. I am fully persuaded of that important truth; for I find it far better with me since I forsook my sins, than I did while living in them; and I see, more fully than ever, that the will of God is my complete and eternal salvation.

P. It certainly is; and it should be our continual care to be prepared for that glorious reward.

B. That is what I greatly desire; and I shall esteem it a favour to converse with

you a little upon this subject, that I may be better acquainted with every thing which will prepare me for the presence of that God who is "glorious in holiness."

P. I am glad to find that you are making such inquiries; and, as a steward of the mysteries of God, I shall willingly set before you that great salvation which is promised in the new covenant to all believers.

B. I am convinced that the more I have of the divine Spirit influencing my mind, the more I shall be enabled to glorify God.

P. In this you are right; for his glory is the end of our being; and all our powers, both of body and of mind, should be freely and fully employed in his holy service. But this cannot be done unless we are graciously assisted by his blessed Spirit.

B. This entire devotedness to God is what my soul longs for. I have often read of it, and have often heard it spoken of in public; which has had a good effect upon my mind: yet, still, I want to see more clearly into this very interesting subject. I have, therefore, many questions to ask concerning it.

P. Many excellent things have been written concerning Christian holiness; and we shall do well seriously to attend to them: and if I can cast one ray of light more upon the subject, I shall cheerfully do it. You are therefore welcome to ask what questions you please, and I will endeavour to speak to the point as much as I possibly can.

B. I am thankful for the readiness you discover to instruct me ; and I hope so to retain what may be said as greatly to profit thereby. The first thing, then, which I desire to know, is, What do you mean by entire Sanctification ?

P. By entire Sanctification you are to understand, the purification of our souls from all sinful defilement, their renewal in the image of God, and the dedication of the whole man to His service : or thus,—the purification of our nature by the Holy Spirit, its renewal in righteousness and true holiness, and its entire dedication to God.

B. This seems very clear and satisfactory to me.

P. It is no small mercy to have right views of this blessed state ; what you now want is, to see that it is your duty and privilege to possess it.

B. I certainly feel my want of it, and am desirous of obtaining it ; yet I should be thankful if this sense could be strengthened. Be pleased, therefore, to lay before me some of the traces of remaining evil ; for though I am conscious of the conflict between nature and grace that is carried on within me, I cannot easily describe it. Perhaps a clear discovery of my condition may have a tendency to inspire me with greater longings for a full deliverance.

P. The evil of our nature branches itself out so very widely, that it would be difficult indeed to follow it through all its windings.

But, before taking further notice of this matter, I should wish to recall to your remembrance the state in which you were while nature reigned paramount in your heart.

B. You purpose then to speak of my unconverted state.

P. Yes, that is my intention. You know how complete a dominion sin had gained over you; so great, that you were without hope and without God in the world, and consequently free from evangelical righteousness, rendering your members instruments of unrighteousness unto iniquity.

When the Lord, in mercy to your soul, convinced you of sin by his Holy Spirit,—when your heart was humbled and broken for your ingratitude and offences,—when, through faith in the blood of Christ as your great atonement, you were delivered from the bondage in which you had been held; being no longer under the law of sin, you renounced its authority; and, yielding yourself to God as one alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to holiness, you experienced a marvellous change. The heavenly sweetness which then filled your mind caused you to rejoice with unspeakable joy, and to pour forth the most heartfelt gratitude to your Redeemer.

While this continued,—while your heart kept soaring above, and the Lord, who knew your weakness and inexperience, kept

you free from the violence of temptation, you did not perceive the remains of corrupt nature. Afterwards, when you entered into various conflicts, trials, and difficulties, which damped your joy, you then began to feel that the life and love you had received were comparatively small, and sometimes perhaps proved that they were insufficient; so powerful were your temptations, and so strong the risings of evil in your heart. And may I not add, that many times you have grieved the Holy Spirit after such a manner, that you have been constrained to renew your repentance with much grief and sorrow of mind, that he might not depart from you?

B. This, I confess, has too often been my state; yet when I bemoaned my folly, and exercised faith in a crucified Saviour, he forgave, and comforted me again.

P. It was because he loved you, and willed your salvation; but unless you experience a deeper work of grace, you are still liable to be tossed about in the same way. While any principle contrary to holiness remains in your heart, it affords a handle to the powers of darkness; and they will not fail to lay hold of it, that they may destroy your peace, and prevent you from glorifying the God of your mercies. Now for your farther information in this matter, and that you may see greater necessity of having this leprosy of the soul removed, I will endeavour to set before you what has been

passing in your breast, or may have been felt by you: yet, observe, I do not speak thus to discourage you, but as a means of humbling you and of bringing you nearer to God.

B. I hope to be thankful for the trouble you give yourself on my account, and shall willingly hearken to whatever will tend to my real advantage.

P. I would then ask, if you have not sometimes found that PRIDE has had too much place in your heart? Have you not sometimes been ready to think yourself possessed of more religion than you really had? And have you not been in danger of thinking more highly of yourself on account of this your piety, and of undervaluing others to the feeding of your own vanity? Have you not been exceedingly hurt, if some have been wanting in respect to you, or have spoken things to your apparent disadvantage? Have you not secretly applauded yourself for your performances? Have you not taken more pleasure in those who flattered you, than in those who even justly and lovingly reprov'd you? Have you not hearkened to what has been spoken to your praise, with too great eagerness and satisfaction? Have you not often set too great a value upon your person, gifts, and abilities? Can you enumerate the vain thoughts which have lodged within you? Have you not in many things (and those of no great moment) been too stiff and opinionated? Have you not gloried too much in your

friends, relations, and possessions? Have you not occasionally made too splendid a show of your natural, spiritual, and intellectual riches or gifts? Has not finer or better apparel made you look for more respect from others, or think much more highly of yourself? Has not this subtle pride mixed itself with your secret thoughts, your conversations with your friends, and even your devotional exercises? To follow this evil through all its *aspirings, boastings, inventions, conceits, arrogance, and scornfulness*, would be difficult indeed. How true then is that saying, "A man's pride shall bring him low;" for so long as the heart is not purified from this evil, it cannot be advanced *high* in the estimation of Heaven.

B. This has too often been my case; and it has been matter of surprise that I, who feel myself so completely indebted to divine grace, should ever observe such propensities to vanity, self-applause, or haughtiness. Proceed in your description.

P. Have you not felt also much of the workings of UNBELIEF? After the clearest and most delightful discoveries of your Redeemer's love, have you not been ready to question it? Would not something in your heart, if submitted to, cause you to discredit many of the revealed truths of God? Have you not been too apt to distrust others, placing less confidence in them than you ought; though you had not the least reason for so doing? Are you not

sometimes inclined to doubt the care of Divine Providence, and to fear that you will one day be forgotten of God? Have you not suffered the reasonings of evil men secretly to undermine your faith? Have you not given place to doubt and fear, from no other cause than your unbelieving reasonings? Have not your prayers been without faith? At least have you not offered up petitions without expecting an answer? In seasons of temptation, coldness, and indifferency, have you not been more inclined to derive consolation from your past experience, than to look to the Lord as a present help in trouble? Have you not sometimes been ready to question the being or attributes of God,—the truth of the Christian dispensation.—and the reality of grace in your own heart? Have you not sometimes been more ready to hear, or give, an evil report of the good land, and to turn again to spiritual Egypt, than to go forward to Canaan? Have you not sometimes been so much off your guard, that when you have seen worldly men in their pleasures and prosperity, you have felt as though their portion were better than yours?

While unbelief thus lurks in the heart, will it not produce a most plentiful crop of *doubts, fears, suppositions, suspenses, unprofitable reasonings, fruitless speculations and idle and perplexing thoughts*, till the precious grace of God is well nigh choked; till peace and joy have taken their flight; and the

heart is filled with *hardness*, the tongue with *complaining*s, and the life with *unfruitfulness*?

B. This is a great truth. These evils must have exceedingly retarded my growth in grace.

P. This is the case of too many. Unbelief not only tends to hinder the progress of the soul in holiness; but it greatly dishonours God, impairs the soul's health, and prevents the Redeemer from working his mighty works among us.

B. May the Lord increase my faith! There is great need of it; but I am interrupting you. Go forward then in your discoveries; that, seeing the sinfulness of sin, I may loathe and cease from it for ever.

P. My next inquiry then is, Do you not sometimes find yourself troubled with **ANGER**, and too much warmth of temper? We should show forth our works in all that meekness which heavenly wisdom teaches; but have not your looks been by far too severe, and your words more sharp and cutting than that wisdom allows? Have you not hurt yourself by peevishness, by quarrelsome disputations, obstinate debates, and unkind reflections? Have you not sometimes felt too much satisfaction in paining others? Have you not at times been carried away by resentment? Has there not been something like malice in your heart, towards those who have offended or deceived you? Have not little things frequently quite

discomposed you? Has there not sometimes been something overbearing, froward, and vexatious about you? Has not the zeal and piety of others so far provoked you as to draw unguarded and unwarrantable expressions from your lips? Have you not warmly insisted upon your right in frivolous matters? Have you not sometimes been guilty of an unjustifiable and sullen silence towards some that have intentionally or unintentionally grieved you? On other occasions, have you not indulged so vindictive a temper, that you were scarcely to be spoken with! When you have offended others, have you not been too slow to seek forgiveness? Have you not been guilty of menacings and threatenings when a milder mode would have been better received, and attended with happier effects?

By these questions I do not suppose that you have been guilty of every thing here brought to your view, though it is not impossible; but my intention is, to give you an opportunity for self-examination, that in whatever instances you find you have been wrong, you may see the necessity of having more help from the Spirit of God, and a larger measure of grace communicated to you.

This warmth of temper is but too common, and is very inconsistent with the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

Whatever visits we receive from God, whatever refreshings of his grace, this anger

destroys their blessed effects, and leaves us mourning and discouraged. It promotes *shyness, impatience of contradiction, painful reflections, and distraction of mind*. And should you remain under the power of it, you will grieve the Spirit of God, exceedingly lessen yourself in the estimation of your pious friends and acquaintance, destroy your own peace, and thereby render yourself unable, to a great degree, either to do or to receive good.

B. What you say is too true an account of my heart; this warmth of temper has hurt both myself and others. The Lord help me to put it entirely away!

P. Another thing which I suppose has given you trouble is ENVY. It is a great thing to see others honoured, and ourselves neglected, and not be hurt by it,—to see others prosper, and not ourselves, and yet rejoice at it,—to see others well circumstanced, and we thankful to God for our own situation. But have you not been pained when you have seen others preferred to yourself, especially if you believed they were not much better than you, if so good? Are you never pained at another's welfare? Have you not envied the wise for their wisdom; the rich for their riches; and sometimes the truly spiritual even for their religion? Envy is one of the worst of evils, and should have no place in regenerate souls. It is exceedingly opposed to the very genius and spirit of the Gospel, which is a complete system

of benevolence. This disposition can never enter the abode of angels. It is an evil that must be utterly destroyed. If you think I speak too strongly concerning this, consider it was envy that moved Satan to tempt the first happy pair, by which means all the human race were involved in one common destruction: by this Joseph was sold as a slave,—Daniel cast to the lions,—Jesus given over to the Roman governor. This “bitter envy,” as St. James terms it, springeth from the wisdom that is earthly, sensual, devilish, &c. From hence arise *murmuring, complaining, discontent, whispering, evil surmising, unthankfulness, and selfishness*. My prayer is, that you may obtain a complete deliverance from it, and an everlasting aversion to it.

Have you not also found yourself beset with **WORLDLY-MINDEDNESS**? Have you not sometimes felt yourself too much alive to pleasure; too desirous of riches; too eager to be esteemed by worldly men; entering too much into their spirit, maxims, principles, and designs; too much afraid of losing your good name, character, and business for the cause of religion? Have you not too much dreaded persecution and its consequences? Have your views been pure in the prosecution of business? According to the Scriptures, you should labour for the supply of your own wants, the maintenance of your family, the relief of the necessitous poor, and the support of religion and the state,

Have you not entered so fully into business, as to neglect prayer, reading, and meditation? Have you not been so expensive in dress, furniture, and various superfluities, as to be under the necessity of being a scanty, instead of a liberal, giver; and have you not sometimes given rather grudgingly than cheerfully? Is it not said, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" and have you not, in many cases, sown to the flesh where you should have sown to the Spirit? Have you not neglected, from the fear of man, or some other cause, to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow the Saviour? Has not inordinate affection prevailed in some instances, avarice in others, and frequently desires inconsistent with purity? Have you not found a want of both purity of intention, and purity of affection, on many occasions?

Now, the advice given us by the Apostle is, "Love not the world, neither the things of the world;" and "Be not conformed to this world."

So far as you are alive to these things, you are proportionally hindering and destroying the life of God in your soul, and depriving yourself of many blessings. For these and such like things so distract and divert the mind from God, that it frequently becomes cold or negligent about vital religion,—exceedingly deficient in warm and affectionate praise,—loses the spirit of prayer

and watchfulness,—falls into lightness and trifling,—is carried away from its rest and centre,—gets shorn of its strength,—and thus becomes a more easy prey for the lion that goeth about seeking whom he may devour.

The Lord may visit you in this state : yet his visits are likely to be transient, and your soul will advance exceedingly little in the way to heaven.

Nothing then is more evident, if it is required of us to perfect holiness in the fear of God, than that it is impossible for us to be entirely devoted to him, while such things cleave to us ; and hence you see the necessity of obtaining a higher salvation.

B. I sincerely thank you for these remarks, and am convinced, from the consideration, merely, of remaining impurities, that it is necessary to be entirely sanctified. I must leave you at present ; but hope to see you again, when I shall be thankful if you will resume the subject.

P. Farewell. The Lord be with you, and “ fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.”

CONVERSATION II.

B. I have thought closely upon what passed in our last conversation ; and by a careful examination of my own heart, find your interrogations must, in general, be an

swered in the affirmative. I am fully satisfied that these evil propensities must be purged away, before I can stand with joy in the presence of God.

P. It is well that such a discovery is made to you; but there are other reasons why you should be entirely sanctified, besides those already produced.

B. What are they?

P. You are in a world abounding with iniquity,—exposed to numerous temptations from Satan,—among apostates, backsliders, false brethren, and lukewarm professors,—among despisers of this salvation,—in danger from your own imagination, natural slothfulness, wants, fears, and desires. You are in danger of being deceived by your own senses. Your friends may betray you. In short, you are constantly exposed to some temptation, whether at home or abroad, in private or in public, in your labours or devotions, in prosperity or adversity, in all states, circumstances, or conditions; there is no place free, no Christian is exempt. Now, the more you live to God, and under the influence of his Spirit, and the more you are dead to sin, the better you will understand the nature and tendency of Satan's devices, and find power to cast them down and trample them under your feet; and to say, with your blessed Saviour, "The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me."

B. I believe this: I believe that the more

I have of God in me, the more easy and complete my victories must be ; for greater is He who is in us that believe, than he who is in those that believe not. But what other reason do you assign to induce me to seek entire sanctification.

P. When you are entirely sanctified, you will be the better fitted for the service of God. The most acceptable services done for his glory are those performed by the holy angels ; and they are so pleasing to him, that our Lord has taught us to pray, that his will may be done by us on earth, as it is done by them in heaven. And the Apostle Paul tells us, that if we purge ourselves from sin and error, we shall be “vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” As you then are laid under the greatest obligations to love and serve God, a sense of the benefits you have received will cause you to desire that the best and most perfect services should be paid him ; and therefore a state of pure love is not only desirable, but highly necessary.

B. This I must readily acknowledge, and earnestly desire.

P. Another reason why you should seek this blessing is, it will render you more useful to others. The Lord says, “Them that honour me, I will honour ;” and the Christian considers, that, next to the approbation of God, there can be no greater honour put upon him, than to be employed in

doing good to others. The more holy you are, the more effectual will your prayers be with God, both for your family, the church, and the world. Your advice and example will have a more powerful influence upon all around you, and greater thanksgiving will ascend to God for his exceeding grace on your account. What a number of examples have we in the Scriptures, of holy men of God, who have averted the divine displeasure from persons ripe for destruction, ultimately brought blessings upon families and nations, and have given cause for millions to praise God that such persons were ever born. Aim then, my friend, to be in the fullest sense of the word, "the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a servant of the church, and the glory of Christ."

B. I greatly approve of this. I would be useful: it is one end of my being. And, as the more holy I am, the more useful I am likely to be, I trust that I shall not be satisfied till I awake up after the likeness of my beneficent Redeemer. What other reason have you to assign?

P. This: the more holy you are, the more happy you will be. When the cause of human misery is removed from your heart, its effects will cease. The good things of the Spirit will no longer be kept from you. In his light you will see light, and gaze with inexpressible pleasure on your Lord and Saviour: while the transforming influence of the Holy Ghost will change your grateful

soul into the same image from glory to glory, and fill you unutterably full of happiness and God. For "the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." The love which the Apostle speaks of in his Epistle to the Corinthians being brought into your soul, you will have a foretaste of future felicity ; for what a poet says of liberty may, with a little alteration, be said of this precious love of God :

"Hail, Liberty, thou goddess heavenly bright,
 Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight ;
 Immortal pleasures in thy presence reign ;
 And smiling plenty leads thy virgin-train ;
 Thou mak'st the smiling face of nature gay,
 Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day."

B. This is glorious indeed ; but how does this agree with, "It is through much tribulation ye must enter the kingdom ?"

P. I do not mean that such a state of happiness is to be perfect and uninterrupted. It is not to be expected here. Where so many contrary winds are frequently blowing, it is no wonder that the surface of the soul, like the troubled sea, should sometimes be agitated, notwithstanding the purity of its waters. Yet it may be affirmed, that, though joy is often in this way suspended, the soul's regular progress towards perfection need not be retarded by any number or variety of trials and conflicts : love and peace lie too deep to be destroyed, while the heart is stayed on Christ. As soon as the temptation ceases,

the mind resumes its wonted evenness, and the believer is again enabled to rejoice, pray, and give thanks. In the sight of God, he is as pure when in trouble as when at rest; inasmuch as the blessed Jesus sustained no diminution of his Father's love while sweating blood in the garden, or suffering upon the cross: and when the fight is over, and the victory obtained, there is additional love and joy communicated from the fullness of our Lord.

B. I am satisfied. The will of God is best: If we met with no difficulties, this life could not be called a state of trial; and if they tend to increase our conformity to the Lord Jesus, I do not see how we can expect, or desire, to be exempt from them.

P. Remember that word, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,—for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness: now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." But I have one more reason to assign for entire Sanctification; and that is, the more you are devoted to God on earth, the more glorious and happy you will be in heaven. The stars do not differ more in their degrees of brightness, than the saints in their different degrees of glory in the heavenly state. "Every man shall be rewarded according to his works." Think then, my friend, of the prize before you. Let no

man take your crown. If you wish to be near the throne, among the most holy, grateful, honourable, and happy spirits, this is the way; let your whole life and every part of it be devoted to God, and you will have the brighter, clearer, and fuller discoveries of himself and his infinite perfections to all eternity.

You see then, from what has been said, that this salvation is so necessary in itself that without it we cannot be admitted into the divine presence; and with it we shall be blessed ourselves, be a blessing to others, more abundantly honour and glorify God, and be more gloriously rewarded in the world to come.

B. Yes; I see enough to encourage me to proceed in the pursuit of this great salvation.

P. I am glad to observe your fervent desire after it; I will therefore endeavour to set before you the encouragements you have to be more desirous of obtaining it. These arise, from the nature of God,—his hatred and punishment of sin in the angels,—his first design in regard to man,—his chastisement of man's rebellion,—his provision of a Saviour,—his choice of the most holy persons for his service,—his commands to "follow after righteousness,"—his promises respecting the attainment of it,—the prayers offered up for it,—and the many examples given us of its possessors,—the design of the Gospel-ministry,—the nature of the rewards

consequent on entire purity of heart,—the remarks and exhortations with which Scripture abounds concerning it,—the love which the Lord bears to you as a living member of his mystical body,—and, finally, the preparation which he has wrought in you already for receiving such a blessing.

1. *From the nature of God.* “He is holy; glorious in holiness, without iniquity; righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. He is perfectly independent of all creatures, receiving no addition to his happiness, but every moment communicating from his fullness a rich supply to each. As his happiness is therefore from himself alone, must it not arise from the contemplation of his own most holy nature and perfections,—from that complete and inexpressible rectitude which he possesses in himself? This being the source of his infinite complacency and delight, must he not approve of his own image in his creatures? Undoubtedly he must. This then is great encouragement for you to desire that with which he is so well pleased; that, being “created after him in righteousness and true holiness,” you may resemble him for ever.”

2. *His hatred and punishment of sin in the angels who kept not their first estate.* These were once pure and holy spirits, observant of his will, and rejoicing in his presence; but, falling into sin, they were banished from before his throne without recal, and are now “reserved in everlasting chains of

darkness unto the judgment of the great day." If sin in them was so hateful in his sight, as to bring those dreadful marks of his displeasure, it certainly must be acceptable to him that you should desire a full deliverance from so great an evil, and it must be his will and pleasure that your desire should be speedily and fully accomplished.

3. *From his first design in regard to man*, who was created in his own image, and so free from every kind of moral defilement, that his all-comprehending wisdom pronounced him *very good*. Is he, then, "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness; neither shadow of turning?" Surely, then, that state of purity which was so pleasing to him when he uttered these words, must be equally pleasing to him now. As he has graciously undertaken to restore you to purity of heart, his will must be your sanctification; and his willingness again to bless you with the resemblance of himself must be as great as his power to effect it.

4. *The chastisement of man's rebellion*, though tempered with mercy, shows how highly offensive sin is to the holiness and majesty of God. The guilty pair were banished from the happy garden; rendered liable to a thousand evils during the space of their natural lives; condemned to die, they knew not when, and return to the dust; and, should they fail to make their peace with God, obnoxious, after all, to the same punishment which had been inflicted on the

rebel-angels: yea, multitudes of Adam's posterity, who have died impenitent, are already, like those fallen spirits, "delivered into chains of darkness," where they expect with horror their certain doom of eternal misery. As, therefore, sin is the cause of such disorder and wo, and so exceedingly opposed to God, it must be his good pleasure that his children should be completely rescued from its power. He that so pursues his enemy must intend his destruction. Your desire, then, to be delivered from the body of sin must necessarily meet with approbation at the throne of grace, where your Redeemer is seated, "*making all things new.*"

5. The end of Christ's coming into the world was, "*to save us from our sins; that we, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*" He sanctified himself, that we might be sanctified through the truth. "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." He "loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." If this was the end of his coming into the world, can that end be answered unless

you be entirely sanctified? Has he not power to effect his purpose? If Satan had power to efface your Lord's image in you, cannot he destroy all his evil works in your soul? Undoubtedly he can. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." How sweetly is this exemplified in the case of the leper!—

"The dire disease had spread
Throughout his mortal frame;
He heard of Jesu's power, and fled
To know and prove the same:

" 'Lord, if thou wilt,' he cried,
 'Thou canst thy servant heal;'
 'I will,' at once our Lord replied;
 Then touch'd, and he was well."

So he will say to you; and your iniquity shall all be purged away, to your comfort and his glory.

6. We see the same truth in *his choice of the most holy persons for his service*. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord; and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart;—The Lord hath set apart for himself the man that is godly." From these he chooses his messengers. These are the most precious in his sight. These he most delights to honour. These he makes most useful to men, and these he will crown with greater glory for ever. The most holy, like their blessed Lord, "love righteousness and hate iniquity;" and therefore they will be "anointed with the oil of gladness above their fellows,"

both here and hereafter. O, then, let it be your only ambition to be as holy as possible, that you may always have the witness that what you do is right! Aim to walk with him as Enoch,—to fear him as Noah,—to trust in him as Abraham,—to meditate upon him as Isaac,—to wrestle with him as Jacob,—to submit to his providence as Joseph,—to converse with him as Moses,—to be bold for him as Joshua,—to be steadfast in his cause as Caleb,—upright as Samuel,—thankful as David,—loving as John,—and zealous as Paul;—in a word, to be a follower “of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises;” that, being a Christian in whom is no guile, and having the image deeply stamped upon your soul, you may thus be made meet to be a rich “partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.”

7. The Lord *has commanded it* in a hundred places; and his authority is not to be disputed. Proud and haughty Pharaohs may say, “Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?” but the obedient Christian should say, “What the Lord commandeth that will I do.” If you now are willing to submit, hear his voice from heaven speaking to you in these solemn words: “I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect.—Ye shall sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy: for I am holy.—Wash you, make you clean. Wash thy heart from wickedness; how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?—My son, give me thy heart.—Make

you a new heart and a new spirit.—Be perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.—As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.—Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.—Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.—Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump.—Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his.—Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.—Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.—Put off the old man, and put on the new, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.—Be filled with the Spirit.—Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.—Follow peace with all men, and holiness; without which no man shall see the Lord.—Beloved, be diligent, that you may may be found of him in peace *without spot and blameless*.—Serve God with a perfect heart and willing mind,” &c.

8. *The Lord has graciously promised this great blessing*; and what he has promised he will surely make good to you, “with all his heart and all his soul.” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.—Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no

guile.—The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.—I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring.—I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be *clean*: from all your *filthiness*, and from *all your idols*, will I cleanse you. *A new heart* also will I give you; and *a new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.—I will also save you from all your uncleanness.—He shall save his people from their sins.—He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”

And let it be here observed, that all the promises of God are made and given to believers, that they may be made meet for heaven by partaking of the *divine nature*; and then be put in actual possession of the incorruptible inheritance. It is not possible that any thing that defiles should enter those most holy mansions; for the felicity of heaven consists in our union with God, who abhors iniquity, and will not suffer evil to unite with his spotless nature. O how exceedingly great and precious are the promises of our God! And they are all “*yea*

and *amen* in Christ Jesus" to those who believe.

9. I will next remind you of *the prayers offered up for the attainment of it*. These holy persons who thus petitioned for the unspeakable gift for others, or for themselves, prayed in the Holy Ghost, and according to the divine will; you may therefore ask, if necessary, in the same words, and expect the answer, to your unspeakable comfort.

Our blessed Lord prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth;" and has taught us to pray that the will of our Heavenly Father "may be done on earth as it is in heaven;" which shows that we should be fully conformed to him in all things. His servants have also said many things of the same import, requesting such a fulness of grace as might renew the soul in true holiness and love. Hear the great Apostle of the Gentiles: "I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.—The Lord make you to increase and abound in

love one toward another, and toward all men: to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God.—The very God of peace *sanctify you wholly*; and I pray God that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.—The God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.” More might be added, but these are sufficient to show you what you may plead at the throne of grace. May the Lord “fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God; and grant unto you, that, being delivered out of the hands of your enemies, you may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of your life!”

10. You may also take encouragement from *those who are said to enjoy this blessing*. As the privileges of the Christian dispensation are so much greater than any that preceded it, (the least in the kingdom of heaven being greater than John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets,) I shall speak chiefly of New Testament believers.

We read, that all who were assembled on the day of Pentecost were “*filled with the Holy Ghost*;” and afterwards, when the number of disciples was increased, it is said, that after the prayer offered up concerning

the trial of Peter and John, they were "all *filled* with the Holy Ghost," spake the word with boldness, and were all of one heart and one soul; perfectly united in mind, judgment, and affection.

St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, says of himself and his fellow-labourers, that they walked "holily, justly, and unblameably among them."

In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is observed, that "he who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one [nature]: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

St. Peter calls the believers to whom he wrote, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:" observing, that they had "purified their souls, in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren."

The beloved John says, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth *us* from *all* sin."

The apostle Jude dedicates his short Epistle to "them that are *sanctified* by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ."

Our blessed Lord himself says in the Revelation, "then hast a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy."

We here see several examples of persons entirely sanctified,—dead to sin, and alive to God. Consider then their holy conversation, and follow their faith, that you may be complete in Christ; washed in the open fountain; adorned and made like the “King’s daughter, all glorious within.”

11. *The Gospel ministry and the ordinances of divine service* were appointed for the same purpose. “For he gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” His ordinances also are wells of salvation, whence we are with joy to draw the living water, to strengthen, refresh, and fertilize our thirsty souls.

12. Consider also *the nature of its rewards*. — Not to speak of the great deliverance from sin and its dreadful consequences, we will consider a little the blessings flowing from the possession of this promised rest: it may induce you to press forward with greater earnestness.

Your soul will be delivered from disorderly passions, guilty fears, perplexing and anxious thoughts, troublesome desires, fruitless wishes, and a variety of vain and hurtful things.

The Lord will keep your mind in perfect peace. He will bless you with everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Your joy will be full. His presence will go with you and give you rest. You will rejoice in hope of the glory to be revealed. Your heart will overflow with gratitude. Your tongue will celebrate his praise. All your fresh springs will be in him. His ways and service will become more delightful to you. Mercy and loving-kindness will follow you continually. Darkness will become light before you, and crooked things straight. You will be anointed with that unction from above which will teach you all things. His Sabbaths will be as festivals; you will call them holy, honourable, and delightful. You will taste the pleasures of Christian fellowship. In short, if you follow on to know the Lord, your sun shall no more go down, neither shall your moon withdraw itself; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God your glory. He will be to you as the former and latter rain in its season. The days of your mourning, as it respects the bitterness of sin in yourself, will be ended; and if you sorrow for others, though this may suspend your joy for a season, it will ultimately increase it for ever.

Consider again, every thing will now work together for your good; and while you simply and humbly trust in the Lord, "no weapon that is formed against you shall

prosper." Nothing will separate you from the love of Christ. Every fresh circumstance will bring your graces into exercise, and add greater lustre to your crown.

Death and judgment, which so greatly terrify others, will not damp your joy: on the contrary, they will afford matter for your songs, and add swiftness to your race. You will say, on the very brink of eternity, "Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

You will be more useful to others. This, to a truly gracious soul, as has been already observed, is a matter of no small importance. The Apostle counted not his life dear to himself, so he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus. You may not indeed be called to the work of the ministry, but you are called to do all the good you can; and I know nothing, next to the favour of God, in which you will find more lasting satisfaction than in turning sinners from the error of their way, or helping forward those who, through grace, have believed in the Lord. And if you should be the means of saving one soul from death, it will be a more glorious exploit than was ever performed by all the celebrated ambitious heroes of past or present times.

But what is best of all, there is laid up for you in heaven an unfading crown, which the Lord the righteous Judge will give you when he appears in his glory. "He that is

holy let him be holy still ;” for he shall find his account therein. “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city :” for “there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth : but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life ;” and these are such, and such only, as have washed their robes, and made them white, in his most precious blood.

13. *Remarks and exhortations concerning it.* St. Paul observes concerning himself, and the saints of God in his day, that they were his *workmanship* ; and if so, it must be admitted, that this great work of our salvation will be worthy of himself. His work is acknowledged to be perfect in nature, providence, and redemption ; and why not in the sanctification of his people ? The Scripture certainly admits it, both when speaking of the whole, or parts of their character :—“Mark the *perfect* man, and behold the *upright*.—Blessed are the *perfect*, or the *undefiled* in the way, that seek him with their whole heart : *they do no iniquity*.—If any man offend not in word, the same is a *perfect man*.—Whom we preach ; that we may present every man *perfect* in Christ Jesus.—He is the rock, his work is *perfect* : a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.—Jesus, that he might *sanctify* the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.—Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniqui-*

ty, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”—And as it respects parts of this character, we read that “*patience*” is to “have its *perfect* work,” and that “*faith* is made *perfect* by works.—He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made *perfect*.—Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast *perfected* praise.” We read also of the “riches of the full *assurance* of *understanding*,” “the full *assurance* of *hope*,” and “the *peace* of God which passeth all understanding:” of rejoicing “with *joy* unspeakable,” and being presented “faultless, with *exceeding joy*,” of being “strengthened to all *long-suffering* with joyfulness:” of *gentleness*, disposing the mind to show “all *meekness* to all men:” of being “full of *goodness*,” and “*temperate in all things*,” of “serving the Lord with all *humility* of mind,” and being “clothed with *humility*,” of being “*ever merciful*.”—All which things evidently set forth the work of him who, before the foundation of the world, ordained that “we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”

It therefore appears very natural to hear such exhortations as these:—“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.—I beseech you to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.—Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.—Be strong in the Lord and in the

power of his might.—Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, forgiving one another; and above all these things put on charity which is the bond of perfectness.”

11. *The relation in which you stand to God* as a member of Christ’s mystical body, and the love he bears you on that account, is another ground of encouragement. Consider these words, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him:” and you must see the infinite satisfaction he takes in your blessed Mediator, and how pleasing it is to him that you are guided by the truths he taught. So great is his love to you, and all that believe in him, that he would not even trust you fully to the care of angels, but made your Lord and King the Captain of your salvation. (Heb. ii. 5.) He is the head of his body, the church, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; (Eph. i. 22, 23;) and having given you so rich a gift, he will with him also freely give you all things. (Rom. viii. 32.) He will give you grace and glory. (Ps. lxxxiv. 11.) Yea, “all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.”

· Lastly. You have great reason to expect it from *what the Lord has wrought in you, as*

preparatory to this evangelical holiness. When you were far off by sin and wicked works, he brought you near to himself by the blood of Jesus. 'Though your sins were more in number than the hairs of your head, yet he blotted out the hand-writing that was against you, and cast them all behind his back. He has given you a heart to fear him and to do his pleasure. He has brought you from the miry clay, set your feet upon a rock, and put a new song in your mouth, even praise unto your compassionate God. He has adopted you into his family, and repeatedly healed the backslidings of your soul.

It would be difficult indeed to enumerate all : for his fatherly compassion has followed you all the days of your life ; and I am persuaded, that if you are not moved away from the "hope of the Gospel," this desire you feel to be wholly sanctified shall certainly be fulfilled ; the Lord will finish the work he has begun, and make you fit for his kingdom and glory. Leave therefore the first principles, as builders the foundation in raising their superstructure, and go on to perfection ; that the head-stone may be brought forth with shoutings " Grace, Grace unto it !"

B. Well, here is sufficient encouragement. O that I may never rest till mine eyes have seen his full salvation !

P. Farewell for the present. The next

time we meet, I will speak a little of the manner in which it is to be obtained.

B. This is what I am desirous of knowing; I shall therefore be with you again the sooner.—Farewell.

P. May the God of peace be with you.

CONVERSATION III.

B. SINCE our last meeting, I have more deeply considered the importance of purity of heart; and being desirous of receiving so great a benefit, I shall be glad to know the *surest* and *speediest* way of obtaining it.

P. It gives me great satisfaction to observe the intenseness of your desire; and I will endeavour to give you what information I possess, that you may rejoice in the utmost salvation of your Redeemer.

B. From what has already passed between us on this subject, I feel disposed to receive whatever you may point out to me from the infallible oracles of truth; because I am persuaded that you are as unwilling to misinterpret Scripture as I am to be misled.

P. Whatever may be advanced, I hope you will be constrained to acknowledge, that in nothing I depart from revealed truth.

B. I trust I shall.

P. I suppose, then, that you are convinced, that whatever we receive from God is not *debt* but *free gift*; for we are such un-

profitable servants, that we must for ever relinquish all ideas of merit. Not that I deny the rewardableness of good works; for the Lord has declared, more than once, that "every man shall be rewarded according to his works." All I intend is, that, though God has promised to bestow certain blessings on certain characters, yet still those blessings are free gifts bestowed upon us not for our deservings, but for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. This I readily admit.

P. Well, then, if the gifts of God are free, and to be received by faith, entire sanctification being amongst these gifts, must be received by faith also.

From the first time we come to God, till we were called to see him as he is, we can only please him by exercising faith in his veracity and benevolence. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his Prophets, so shall ye prosper.—Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him." (2 Chron. xx. 20; Heb. xi. 6.) If then you would be put in possession of full salvation, you must keep this continually in view. You cannot expect to receive so great a favour unless you please him; but by thus believing, you will always please him; and may assure yourself that this blessing, with all the happiness attending it, will soon be yours.

Let us, then, observe what the Scriptures say on this subject.

When St. Paul received his commission from the Lord Jesus to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, they were to "receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among the *sanctified*, by faith in him."

St. Peter, in the conference held at Jerusalem, in an appeal to his brethren, observed that God made no difference between Jew and Gentile, "purifying their hearts by faith."

We are "to receive the promise of the Spirit by faith." Now, if by the Spirit we are to understand all his sanctifying influences then this promise certainly contains the blessing of full sanctification, and consequently we must expect to obtain it by faith.

"We," says the Apostle, "through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." Supposing by this hope is meant the glory of heaven; yet, as "without holiness no man can see the Lord," it must include a meetness for it. And it is not improbable that the righteousness he mentions in this verse may mean the very state of which I am speaking, as it does in Matt. v. 10; Phil. iii. 9, 10; where righteousness is put for pure religion.

Again. "By grace are ye saved, through faith;" (and salvation implies sanctification;) "and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Supposing he is speaking of justifi-

cation only, (which I think he is not,) yet what reason can be assigned why we are to be justified by faith, and not sanctified in the same way ?

The Apostle prays that " Christ may dwell in the hearts of believers by faith." What can this imply, but such a perfect union with Christ as excludes all enmity and impurity whatever ? Such a union as this cannot subsist without real holiness of heart and life. Christ and Belial can no more agree than light and darkness.

St. James says, " that the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy:" by which we are to understand religion, and such a religion as implies purity of heart ; which indeed is wisdom ; accomplishing the best end by the most suitable and certain means. Now, he says, " If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God;" but he adds, " Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."

B. Does not the Apostle, when speaking of " putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," call the faith by which this is done, " the faith of the operation of God ?"

P. Undoubtedly it is God that works faith in us ; but it certainly admits of degrees. You have faith already, and till it becomes perfect, pray with the Apostles, " Lord, increase my faith!" and he will cause your faith and hope to grow exceedingly.

B. Will you describe the manner in which we ought to exercise faith, in our more immediate application to the throne of grace for this blessing?

P. I will endeavour to do it. I will now suppose you solemnly approaching your Father and God for this salvation. To exercise faith aright, you must first aim to consider the promises as given in undissembled love and regard the Promiser as full of grace and truth. Then, keeping a special eye to the blood of sprinkling, you must act upon these views by making on your part an *unreserved* offer of your all to him: humbly and confidently laying claim to all he offers you, and continuing to do this, till "all your soul his entrance feels;" and you are made to prove that "He satisfies you with his favour and fills you with his blessing."

You see then the way in which this blessing is to be obtained: you must, my brother, have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by this new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the vail; looking to him who is High Priest over the house of God, you must draw near in the sincerity of your heart, and in full assurance of faith, having your heart sprinkled from an evil conscience,—and he will say to you with the utmost complacency, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."

B. Is nothing else required of me but the faith you have now mentioned?

P. Undoubtedly there is ; for living faith is never alone : yet faith is the principal thing.

B. What are the things that accompany faith ?

P. A believer who would enjoy this glorious liberty, must sensibly feel his want of it ; this you do ; and therefore we may pass it over.

He must also consider it as a special gift of God, and one of the greatest privileges he can possibly enjoy. He that does not view it in this light, is not prepared to receive so great a favour. "A full soul loatheth the honey-comb ; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

He must beware of backsliding even in heart : for such, if they are any way prepared for the Lord, are only prepared to have their backslidings healed ; and no one ought to think that this is the true conviction of inbred sin which the Spirit produces in those who are going on to perfection. The best way to be convinced of our want of greater conformity to our Lord's image, is to follow increasing light as much as possible ; and those who do this will soon discover the true state of their souls without backsliding.

Again. As a person about to build, wisely removes the rubbish, and digs a proper foundation ; so he that would be built upon his most holy faith, in the fulness of Christian love, must take up his cross, deny

himself of every sin, cast aside every weight, give up every idol, renounce every false maxim, forego tritling and lightness, check every foolish and hurtful desire; in a word, be willing to make a sacrifice to the Lord of every thing offensive in his sight, that it may be burned up.

He must also request the Lord, in earnest and importunate prayer, both in secret and among them that call upon his name out of a pure heart, that he would most graciously cleanse him from all unrighteousness, bring in the mind of Christ, and save him to the uttermost, according to the effectual working of his mighty power.

He should also seek to converse with those who have ceased from the works of sin, and have entered into this rest. They will strengthen and encourage him by their united testimonies, that the blood of Christ so cleanseth from all sin, that it can wash his nature *whiter than snow*. On the other hand, he should shun the company of those false spies, who bring in an evil report of the good land, and make a jest of perfect love. He who despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath promised to give the Holy Spirit in all his fulness to them that ask him.

Once more. As the great adversary of mankind is ever striving to prevent the progress of holiness; he who prepares his mind to walk with God, and obtains the testimony that he pleases him in all things,

must not be discouraged, nor give up his expectation, though he fall into divers temptations; for when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift a standard against him, and save his tempted servant with a mighty arm.

And as he well knows in how many ways he has, through weakness, offended the Lord, come short of his glory, and sunk in the time of trial, he must make humble confession of this before him, and urge it as one of his pleas for being endued with greater power from on high.

To conclude this matter; whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; if *there be* any virtue, if any praise, he must *think* on these things; and the God of peace will be with him, and give him the desire of his heart.

B. I have one thing more to ask before I take my leave:—I have often heard the terms *gradual* and *instantaneous* used in reference to sanctification. Pray what is your opinion as to their applicability?

P. Sanctification, properly speaking, is both gradual and instantaneous: it is, as I have already shown, gradual in regard to our preparation for it, but it is instantaneous with respect to its reception; and the more earnestly we long for it, the more quickly our preparation proceeds. For this disposition of mind makes us watchful against all occasions of outward sin, and resolute to suppress every inward propensity to evil. It also

draws forth our desires after God; and the more these increase, the more heavenly-minded we become. Our knowledge of divine things, and expectation of attainment, like the opening buds of spring, rapidly expand themselves; the great and precious promises reveal their fulness; and to the soul thus longing for the influence of grace, as the thirsty hart for the water-brooks, the Lord never fails to make known his great salvation. In speaking thus, I do not mean that he always works in the same manner. He is pleased to vary his method in different persons. Some have been suddenly convinced of remaining impurities, and have been as deeply distressed for the want of conformity to their living Head, as they were when oppressed with the guilt of their actual transgressions; and, on earnest application to the throne of grace, have been as suddenly delivered. With him all things are possible; and who is bold enough to say to him, What doest thou?

When this entire circumcision of the heart has taken place, and the "superfluity of naughtiness" is cut off, both root and branch, and every inclination to evil is destroyed, then there will be *visible, solid*, and, if we follow on to know the Lord, *lasting* growth indeed. Unbelief and its attendants, those briars and thorns of the soul, being removed, the graces of the Spirit, those plants of righteousness, meeting no longer with so many obstructions, rear their heads towards hea-

ven, and spread their fruitful branches on every side. In this sense it is gradual; but many who speak of a gradual work, do not seem to intend this kind of growth. Indeed there is such a diversity among them, that it is difficult to understand their meaning. Some seem to convey the idea, that sin in a believer is like the roots of a tree, and that the Lord's method is, gradually to loosen the soil, and to cut off, or pull up, the fangs at successive periods, till the whole is separated from their souls.

Others speak as though their souls grew and vegetated regularly and insensibly as a plant; and some of their declarations suppose that neither "the sin that dwelleth in them," nor any other cause whatever, can impede their growth. Again, there are individuals who speak of the influence of grace as a divine seed sown in their hearts, to increase and expand itself, according to the degree of attention which they and the divine husbandman are pleased to pay to it, till all the fruits of righteousness are perfected in them.

There are others, who appear to expect such a succession of smaller blessings as shall in time increase, as it were to a flood, large enough to break down all the banks of sin, and wash the soul free from all its defilement.

Many such similes are adopted to set forth a growth in grace; but without either attempting to justify or censure these modes of

expression, whether as applied to decay of sin, or to a growth in holiness, it is plain that the using of them in TOO LITERAL A SENSE tends more to confuse and perplex us, than to explain the subject.

It is true, the Scriptures abound with such like figures, especially when speaking of what relates to the increase of Christ's government on earth; but must they be adopted without the least restriction? Or shall the growth of an immortal spirit in holiness be absolutely restricted to the progressive life of a vegetable? If, for instance, this blessing must be received in conformity to the growth of corn, there can be no material objection to it, provided with the *manner* we may also have the *time*. Only let it be allowed that God *can* and *does* in general, where it is sought for aright, cleanse his people's hearts, and fit them for his service, in as few months only as are required to ripen and perfect corn, and it will be well received: and yet there is a sense in which I must object even to this; for when the corn is ripe, and has attained to a certain point, it can proceed no further; whereas, the soul of man may increase in the knowledge and love of God for ever.

But while the propriety of adopting these similitudes, with proper restrictions, is admitted to set forth what is gradual in sanctification, there are others employed to illustrate the same blessing, whose operations are much more sudden: as, 1. *stripping off filth*

garments, and putting on change of raiment. As in Zech. iii. 34: "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he spake unto those that stood before him, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." And St. Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, appears to have the same views:—"Put off," says he, "concerning the former conversation, the old man, [sinful principles, habits, and practices,] which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, [every pure and heavenly temper and disposition,] which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephes. iv. 22, &c.)

2. *Purification from ceremonial defilement.*—"For an unclean person, they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel; and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, vessels, and persons." (Num. xix. 17.) See also the case of the leper, Lev. xiv. 7. In allusion to these sprinklings, Ezekiel prophesies of the great fulness of grace that should be imparted to mankind under the Gospel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your

filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh; and I will put my Spirit within you," &c. (Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27.)

3. *The refining of gold and silver by fire.*—Thus of the Lord Jesus it is foretold, that He should "sit as a refiner, and a purifier of silver, and he should purify the sons of Levi, [all his dedicated servants,] and purge them as gold and silver, that they might offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." (Mal. iii. 3.) This was gloriously fulfilled when he instantaneously baptized his infant Church with the Holy Ghost and with fire, on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards; strengthening and purifying them for their own salvation, and for the evangelizing of the world, the promise being universal: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." (Acts ii. 2, 3, 17.) Our Poet has caught the very spirit of this divine manifestation —

"Refining fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.
O that it now from heaven might fall,
And all my sins consume!
Come, Holy Ghost, for thee I call,
Spirit of burning, come!"

Hence we should be cautious in the appli-

cation of scriptural metaphors to the divine life in believers.

As the works of the great Jehovah are always worthy of himself, we should take very great care not to limit him, as it respects either his power or the quickness of its operations. If he speak, it is done; if he command, it stands fast; his word producing those effects in the mind which prepare it for doing his will, with all its ransomed powers. Look at the dying thief: he longed for heaven; and Jesus said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" and who doubts that his soul was prepared for it, or that he now possesses a place in the promised inheritance?

I have been rather more particular in this matter, because of its importance; and from a desire to set aside, if possible, the false notion of growth in those that are declining; for there are too many that profess to grow in grace, who in reality do not; that is, their love, zeal, gratitude, and joy, are no greater, months or years after, than they were at their conversion, and in numerous instances not so great. Now, whatever refreshings they may receive from the presence of the Lord, though they manifest his compassion, they do not prove an actual progress in the divine life. This instability prevents their advancement in holiness and conformity to God. Alternately to conquer, and be conquered by, their inward corruptions, if it does not justify us in saying that

there is no grace, leads us to believe that it is very feeble. A man is not blameable for being born with bad tempers, but for giving way to them, especially in frivolous cases; because it principally arises from being unwatchful, and neglecting to request divine aid in the moment of temptation. Such are perpetually throwing hindrances in their own way, and darkening their prospects of entire sanctification. What! shall the warmth of our hearts, the lightness and trifling of our lives, gain ground upon us; and, because we are now and then favoured with sensible comfort, shall we still say, that we are growing in grace? Are such likely to attain the summit of Christian holiness, the depth of humble love? It is a melancholy truth, and no breach of Christian charity to say, that some who have been professors of religion for many years, have less inclination to be thus holy, are more easily irritated and offended, are less serious and heavenly-minded, and afford less probability of being wholly given to God, than those who are but newly converted.

I fear many consider *that* to be the work of *time*, which is properly the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, because St. John writes to believers under the three estates of childhood, youth, and mature age, many seem to speak as though as much time were requisite to perfect holiness in the soul, as is required to raise us from infancy to manhood. Now though time is requisite for the attain-

ment of holiness, our establishment in it, and uniform practice of it; yet our growth is not to be measured by years, but by the exercise of our faith in the Lord Jesus, who is the fulfiller of the promises; in whom they are all *yea* and *amen*. Spiritual blessings, according to the Scripture, are proportioned to our faith, and not to the time we profess to spend in seeking them: "According to thy faith," says our Lord, "be it done unto thee." By this rule, then, we ought always to expect that the Lord will proceed with us.

However great the blessings may be which the promises hold forth, they are all to be considered as free gifts; and so liberal is the Lord in his favours, that the more enlarged our desires after his fulness are, the more graciously are we received. He delights in pouring the sacred effusions of his grace into the thirsty soul, and in bestowing his benefits according to the greatness of his infinite mercy.

I have known many who have represented the work of holiness as merely gradual; but I do not remember having met with any who professed to have attained entire sanctification, or who affirmed that God had cleansed their hearts, and borne testimony to the truth of his own work, in that way.

If it be objected that their humility kept them from speaking of it, lest it should have the appearance of boasting, I confess I do not see the excellency of their having

hidden the righteousness of God in their hearts. In my opinion, the acknowledgment and profession of it would have been a powerful objection to the doctrine of an instantaneous deliverance from indwelling sin. I think indeed that it is the more necessary for those who may profess to have been saved from sin in this way, to declare it; since such a cloud of witnesses assure us that God baptized their souls with sacred fire, and cleansed them as in a moment.

When you were freely justified by the grace of God, you may remember that you received at the same time a measure of sanctifying grace. And how did you receive it? Was it not in the same instant in which you received pardon? Was it not by faith, and were not both equally instantaneous? Just in the same manner expect the greater blessing, and you will receive the end of your faith, this full deliverance, this glorious rest, and join the numerous witnesses of an instantaneous salvation; ascribing nothing to yourself, but giving all the glory to him to whom it is due.

B. The Lord, who made heaven and earth by his creating word, and said, "*Let there be light, and there was light,*" is able to effect this change in me with equal *ease* and *speed*. O that my Lord may *suddenly* come to his temple, and make it his everlasting habitation!

P. A thousand years with the Lord are as one day.—Farewell, for the present. Re-

member our Lord's words: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

CONVERSATION IV.

P. In what state do you find your soul? Have you found the pearl of great price, that love of God which casteth out fear?

B. I bless his name, I have.

P. I am glad to hear it. Tell me how it was; give me the particulars: your account of it may afford encouragement to others.

B. After our last conversation, I was led closely to meditate upon what had passed, and clearly saw that I must either possess this invaluable treasure, or be poor after all. I saw it was the gift of God through Jesus Christ: and that, as I was a believer in him, the promise was for me. I was convinced also, that I must not expect any thing but in union with him; and that this union must be effected by my receiving a larger measure of the Holy Spirit. Love,—such love as that described by the Apostle, which "suffereth long and is kind; envieth not; vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil: rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things,"—was the very thing I wanted. All else appeared very little in my

eye. I saw that this is the image of God in man, since "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him;" that by *this union* our love is made *perfect*, and by knowing and proving this, as he is, so are we in this world. As all this might be mine, I was determined to wait at the throne of grace till I was endued with power from on high, and prepared, by his sin-consuming baptism, to do all the good pleasure of his will.

P. And were you soon delivered?

B. I believe I might have been, had I not given way to unprofitable reasoning. The Lord says, "Come, let *us* reason together." I should have taken this advice; instead of which, I reasoned with Satan and my own heart so long, that had I not at last resolved to abide by the promises, I should have given up what I had already received.

It was suggested, that, circumstanced as I was, if I got the blessing, I could not keep it: that therefore it was labour in vain to seek it.

P. This is a very common temptation. How did you escape from it?

B. I thought, that if a sparrow falleth not to the ground without the notice of our heavenly father, and if the hairs of our head are all numbered by him; then, whatever my circumstances might be, I was where his providence had placed me. And therefore, as he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, I believed that, however unfavoura-

ble appearances were, I might, upon the whole, be more holy, and bring greater glory to his name in my present than in any *other situation*. The poor widow, with her two mites, did more in the sight of God than the richest offerer with all his abundance.

P. You reasoned justly; since whoever offers his all to God, does all he can: and he that in his present circumstances neglects to do this, would be equally remiss supposing they were to change.—What temptation followed this?

B. I was tempted to discouragement from a view of my past unfaithfulness. I felt what a poor unprofitable sinner I had been; and was ready to ask, Is it possible that one who has received so much in vain, should be intrusted with still greater mercies? This was discouraging; however, it tended to confirm me in this truth, that sanctification is not of *works*, but of *grace through faith*. This I saw to be the only way; and the more I believed it, the more diligent I became.

P. How did you then proceed?

B. I resolved to be very serious in my behaviour, and to attend the ordinances of grace in a more spiritual and becoming manner. Accordingly, I was more in private; paid greater attention to sermons, and to the experience of others; read more; endeavoured to be more watchful and circumspect; aimed at more extensive usefulness; practised greater self-denial, &c.; and,

looking for more sensible comfort and joy, I was surprised to find myself unusually dry. Little consolation was afforded me; and I was continually disturbed by wandering thoughts, dulness, and fretfulness upon the slightest occasions. I saw more clearly into the depths of intred sin. I seemed as loathsome to myself as the leper; and discovered many other things which caused my soul to sigh. But still I cried, "*Take possession, full possession, of this unworthy heart! Thou who hast begun the good work wilt finish it. Speak the word, and thy servant shall be healed.*" During these exercises of faith, the Lord Jesus would sometimes seem to be at a great distance from me: afterward he would appear more precious than ever; and, my heart being filled with the most lively gratitude, I could say,

"Unfaithful as I've been,
Thou'lt pardon all my sin.—
O most precious Lamb of God,
All thy promises are sure;
Through thy sanctifying blood,
Thou wilt make my nature pure!"

Then I sunk again; but still I longed to be delivered from my oppressive load.

P. Too many give up the pursuit here. I rejoice that you did not.

B. No; I could still say, "Faint, yet pursuing;" and I thought while these things were passing in my mind, that I would more narrowly observe such as made a profession

of purity of heart, that I might see wherein they differed from others. In many things I could not see that they differed at all ; and then I was ready to suspect the truth of their experience. In other things they differed materially : they appeared to live more in the spirit of prayer ; in zeal for the salvation of others ; in seriousness of spirit ; in deadness to the world, and spiritual-mindedness. When I saw this, I felt myself reprovèd, and secretly wished to be like them.

P. As to your suspicions, my brother, we know that, as the carnal mind is not subject to the law of love, and has given rise to a common saying among the men of the world, " There is no living without sin ;" so in proportion as this disposition remains in the children of God, they will sometimes be opposed to those who have "*clean escaped.*" They will be too ready to receive what is prejudicial to their character, and, taking advantage of their weakness, be too apt to censure their faith as presumptuous, and misconstrue many of their most innocent actions as inconsistent with their high professions.

B. True ; and hence, with regard to myself, the tempter insinuated that I had better give it up, since there would be so much expected from me, and I must be so very particular ; or, if I was determined to obtain it, I had better keep the secret to myself, and let no one know any thing about it. This at first seemed plausible enough : yet

as the Scriptures exhort us to rejoice when we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, and to tell those who fear God what he has done for our souls, I cried, "Welcome ridicule and reproach in such a cause: welcome the hour that affords me the opportunity of declaring that my Lord can save to the uttermost all those that come to God by him."

Here I obtained the conquest; yet it was suddenly suggested, "Such grace is too great and high for thee." Great indeed, I replied; but He that has given me his beloved Son will with him freely give me all things. It was then intimated, that if I should receive it, and lose it again, I should be worse than if I had never enjoyed it; that I had better put it off for a while, and God would give it me before I died; and beside, that I was not sufficiently prepared, it being a great thing to be rightly prepared. While the enemy was thus coming in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. I saw that there was no necessity for me to lose any thing given me by the Lord: I had only to give up both myself, and all I received, to Him who never slumbers nor sleeps, and he would keep all committed to him to the day of eternity.

With respect to the temptation to put it off, I knew I could not be holy too soon; and that neither the time nor the blessing was at my disposal. The time past was gone for ever; that to come uncertain; the

present moment alone could be called mine.

I felt my want of the blessing, and that was sufficient : and blessed be the Lord, who delivered me from Satan's devices !

I still went forward, praying and expecting. For a time, I was rather freed from temptation, and then clouds came over me again. A suspicion arose, that many who professed to have attained, had not ; having only their backslidings healed. In this I believe I was right ; yet this did not alter the case. The blessing was the same, though many mistakes might be made by individuals concerning it ; yet it occasioned many fears, lest I should go wrong and hurt both myself and others. A variety of promises, indeed, came to my mind, but I too often put them from me. They seemed to belong to others more than to me ; so I was very little comforted or helped by them.

At another time I was led to doubt the truth and sincerity of my past experience. Then my old sins came afresh to my mind. This caused me to look at my feelings, rather than to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus ; and, as might be expected, damped the spirit of prayer, and thus produced a degree of carelessness and indifferency.

Another thing which hurt me a little was, attending to disputations on the subject. It especially discouraged me that some whom I considered good men, should so positively deny that there could be any such thing as

entire sanctification in this life; but, finding that while they rejected the *term*, they earnestly desired the *thing which it signifies*, the objection arising from this circumstance was, at length, removed.

Other fears, doubts, and temptations, arose in my mind; for the enemy thrust sore at me, that I might fall, and be for ever disabled from entering this spiritual Canaan. Yet, as I had truth and God on my side, he could not prevail and I was finally victorious.

My manner of proceeding was this: I looked at the plain Scripture, without regarding the various glosses of men; and I soon saw, in the clearest manner, that the Lord had promised the blessing, and that it was designed for *me*. Then I believed that he was both able and willing to give me the desire of my soul; the desire itself was strengthened, and I saw that so far as I came short of full salvation, I came short of real happiness, and of being what God was waiting to make me.

I was made willing to have the blessing upon his own terms; which I knew implied the placing of every faculty of body and mind entirely under his control; a disposition thus expressed by our Poet,—

“Into thy hands I all resign,
And have no other will but thine.”

My attention was fixed by that passage,
“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and

thou shalt be saved." I saw at once the suitableness and the stability of this means of salvation, and, embracing it with my whole heart, addressed my adorable Saviour in words to the following effect:—"O Lord, my gracious God, I here offer myself wholly to thee, to be thy devoted creature for ever; and will no longer stagger at thy promises through unbelief. Inow accept thine offered aid; I take thee as my indwelling God, as the renewer of my heart, and the guide of my ways; believing that thou will keep that which I here commit to thy trust, and wilt from this moment help me to live to and for thee alone." Then, falling down before him in deep humiliation, I confessed all my sinfulness in the most undisguised manner, acknowledged my stupidity, and kept venturing upon the word and grace of my beneficent and all-sufficient Saviour. My cry was.—

"O that in me the sacred fire
Might now begin to glow!"

He heard my voice, and it did *glow*. Like Jacob, I prevailed. The pure flame of perfect love was immediately kindled in my soul. Unutterable peace flowed in upon me. I was conscious the work was done, and praised God with all my powers, feeling that if I had that moment been called away, heaven would have been my everlasting abode; not only as I was entitled to it by my justification, but now made meet for it by this further work of the Holy Spirit.

P. Did you find any of the promises applied?

B. I do not recollect that any particular words occurred to me at the time.

P. Some persons are favoured with a special application of one or more of the promises. But this is not absolutely necessary. It is enough if the *substance* of the promises be ours,—*if we are made partakers of the divine nature*. Did not temptation follow this blessed change?

B. Yes; a variety of things were presented to my view, which caused me to cry mightily to the Strong for strength; and I was heard in that I feared.

P. Mention some of them.

B. It was suggested, that I had deceived myself; since entire sanctification was something far greater than I had received. Where, it was asked, is the joy, activity, fervour, and gratitude, you expected? Without a more visible change, who will believe your testimony? I was tempted to resentment, pride, peevishness, fretfulness, unbelief, anger, and many other evils; and the temptations were so powerful, and sometimes so subtle and insinuating, so well-timed and plausible, that I was more than once ready to give way to them. But, remembering those words, "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end," I resolved, in the strength of grace, never to yield. I believed what he had

done for me, and praised him for it. As often as I did this, I was more than conqueror; being, after every conflict, more abundantly filled with the Spirit.

P. I rejoice that you took this method; for, had you yielded a single point, the enemy would have pressed hard upon you, to make you give up all, and entirely renounce this blessed prize. Had you done this, what a loss would you have thereby sustained!

While nothing contrary to love remains in your heart, you must never question the reality of the work; for a state of entire sanctification does by no means exempt us from trials and temptations. It requires, indeed, great spiritual discernment always to distinguish between sin and temptation; and many lose the blessing by confounding them. You must, therefore, be careful daily to wait at the posts of wisdom's doors; that, by seeking light in the light of God, you may escape from every snare which may be laid for your feet and go on your way rejoicing.

B. I have remarked that even some believers, when they have heard their brethren speak of their temptations, have suspected them of sinning; which has made me more cautious how I speak of mine. How ought I to have acted in this case?

P. That temptation and sin are widely different needs very little proof. When Joseph was tempted by his evil-disposed mistress, he resisted her solicitations, with

"How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" And, instead of the indelible stain which his character would have received if he had given way to the temptation, his conduct has ever been applauded, and his name mentioned with honour. We read also of one greater than Joseph, who "was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sin.*"

St. James has drawn the line in this case with sufficient clearness. He tells us that "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Hence, it is plain, that no man is injured by temptation, till he yields to its allurements, and suffers his mind to be drawn after the forbidden object. Then evil desire produces sin, and sin produces death: it renders the man guilty, and exposes him to condemnation. Thus we observe, that the power to sin must not be confounded with sin itself; and that the attempts made by others to call this awful power into exercise do not render us guilty in the sight of God. No man, therefore, ought to judge another, or entertain unfavourable surmises respecting him, merely because he has been tempted.

In regard to the practice of mentioning your temptations to others, I am of opinion that, as it may tend to their profit, and to the relief of your own mind, it should not be

discountenanced; yet it is necessary to use caution, that they may be convinced that you hold the "mystery of the faith in a pure conscience," and utterly renounce the unfruitful works of darkness.

B. I have had some reasonings in my mind concerning the witness of the Spirit in sanctification: pray what is your view of it?

P. The witness of the Spirit in this state is much the same as that which followed your justification and adoption. He then bore witness with your spirit, that you were a child of God; and now, that you are purified and made entirely his. There is some difficulty in speaking on this subject, because it is better felt than expressed; yet something may be said of its *influence* and *effects*, though it cannot be fully explained.

Its *influence* is clearly expressed by St. John, where he says, "The anointing which ye have received of him *abideth* in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you *of all things*, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." Where this is experienced, the testimony of our own mind is equally clear that the work is wrought, agreeing with the blessed Spirit of truth, that we are sincerely and fully given up to the Lord; or, as it is expressed by St. Paul, "Our rejoicing is this,—the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but

by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world."

The Spirit of Holiness is the great agent in the renovation of our nature. While in our carnal state, and without his gracious assistance, we cannot please God. We are none of his, but transgressors under condemnation: "for to be carnally-minded is death." We then are at enmity with him, and neither are, nor can be, subject to his holy law. Consequently, if we were not to receive assistance from above, we could never be saved, not having either desire or inclination towards it.

When the Lord in great compassion begins the work of our salvation, he first becomes a "swift witness" against our sins, reprov-ing us especially for our unbelief. In this "spirit of bondage to fear," we are constrained to renounce all our vain confidences, empty pretences to goodness, false and ill-founded hopes; and to lie at his feet as guilty, helpless criminals. Whatever alarms are excited in the soul, which manifestly tend to God, proceed from the Holy Ghost; who teaches us, by these rigorous measures, the absolute necessity of believing in the Lord Jesus for salvation. He glorifies him by taking of the *things* of his kingdom and showing them to us when we are thus humbled; and by this means fills our hearts with joy and gladness.

When this change takes place, and we are adopted into the family of God, then the

Spirit of truth graciously witnesses to our adoption. "He beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God;" and, by imparting righteousness, peace, and joy to our souls, becomes the blessed *seal* of the precious promises of God, and an *earnest* of our everlasting inheritance.

But still there are "things that are reprov'd" remaining in us, which must be removed: for it is not the Lord's usual method to renew us fully "in the spirit of our mind" immediately on our reconciliation with him; because, probably, we are not then sufficiently sensible of the nature or necessity of so great a benefit; and it is not his way to impart blessings till we feel our need of them. He soon, however, by his light, makes manifest the evil propensities of our nature, and points us to the most excellent manner of glorifying his holy name, by directing our hearts into his perfect love. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him: herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world." •

St. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says expressly, "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" and yet he exhorts them not only to avoid gross immoralities, but to put off also the "*old man*,"—the corrupt principles and deceitful desires of their hearts; and to "put on the *new man*, which after God is created in right-

eousness and true holiness," that they might be filled with the Spirit.

As the Holy Spirit thus convinces us of inbred sin, he also bears testimony to the purification of our souls, when it has taken place. "We," says the Apostle, "have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. ii. 12.) Now, sanctification being one of these things, how shall it be known that we have received it, if the Spirit of wisdom do not reveal it to us; or, in other words, testify to the truth of what is wrought in our souls? St. John fully confirms this, when he says, "He that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in God, and God in him; and hereby we *know* that he *abideth* in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." Does not all this evidently prove how clear and express the testimony of the Spirit is to his own work in believers? For my part, I cannot see how such a change can take place, and such a union subsist between them and their living Head, without an inward testimony from above that they and their works are pleasing and acceptable to God.

B. Does this witness immediately follow the purification of the soul?

P. Sometimes it does, but not always. Where it does not, there ought to be a continual expectation till it be received. Where it is not given, the first trial or temptation which damps our joy will probably cause

us to question the reality of what is actually wrought in our hearts; and, by throwing us into a state of unbelief, bring on a great indifferency to this instantaneous deliverance from inbred sin, and incline us to inactivity in the service of God, and to heart-backsliding. It is the aim of Satan to cut off our expectation of greater attainments; and he strikes the deepest in times of discouragement.

To make this still plainer, I would speak of this witness as implying both *act* and *habit*. There are times in which the witness is so strong and clear as to afford the fullest assurance that believers are brought into this glorious liberty; and this is followed by an unusual overflowing of love, joy, and gratitude. Their souls sink into the lowest self-abasement; wonder at the wisdom and goodness of God; and long, as it were, for a thousand hearts and tongues, that they may devote them all to him. The feeling of their souls at such seasons cannot well be described. It is "a rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" an assurance of their *adoption* and *heirship*; an *earnest* and foretaste of heaven; and a blessedness which no one knoweth, save he that receiveth it. This is what I would call the *act*, or *direct witness* of the Spirit.

The other is *habitual*, in such as are established, and is always attended with its proper *fruit*; though, from various causes, the witness itself is not always equally clear:

it is, indeed, a continuation, in a *less degree*, of the act, or direct witness. Believers in this state are obliged to look for the fruit of holiness, as much as at the witness, for their satisfaction; because, as in many other instances, what is habitual, is not so striking as what is new and uncommon. Some, not attending to this, have, by giving way to unprofitable reasonings and distrust, so quenched or grieved the Holy Spirit, that he has, for a season, hid his face from them. By neglecting to believe in the reality of the work, and give glory to his name, they have brought darkness on their minds, and, by the loss they have sustained, proved the truth of this observation. I should be sorry for you ever to try such a painful experiment.

B. What advice would you give me on this subject?

P. The best way for you is, by living much in the spirit of importunate prayer, to get the inner man renewed every day, through the power of God: this will bring much clearer testimonies from the Holy Spirit, and much greater happiness to your own mind. Never attempt to separate the witness of entire sanctification from the fruit of it; that is, so live that you may always be possessed of both; for God hath joined them together, and they should not be put asunder. The more obedient you are to your present light, the clearer will be the witness; and the clearer the witness, the more you will be encouraged to proceed in

the "work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love."

Above all things, beware of doubting, now you have received the blessing. If you should not, depend upon it that you will be in danger of entering *into* temptation. On the other hand, when you are called to bear a public testimony for God, be not afraid or ashamed to declare what he has done for you; and you will ever find, that the more clearly you witness *for him*, the more clearly he will witness *in you*. Such an explicit confession will greatly increase your faith, prove a blessing to others, and promote the glory of your Almighty Saviour. Should you withhold your testimony, you will find it exceedingly difficult to retain the blessing; for the Lord does not intend such a light to be hid under a bushel or under a bed; either in the bustle of the world, or in entire exclusion from its concerns.

The *effects*, or fruits, of this salvation are said by the Apostle to be *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*; in a word, every Christian grace and temper, matured and evangelically perfected after the divine will. O blessed state! may you and I abound therein, walking and living in the Spirit; that his will may be done by us on earth, as it is by those in heaven!

Such are my views of this matter. This I conceive to be the manner of the Spirit's general working on the minds of believers. Some may be led in a way different from

this; for there are “diversities of operations:” yet all tend to one point,—*a meetness for heaven*; for it is the same God that worketh *all in all*, after the counsel of his own will.

B. I hope to profit by what you have said. Still pray for me, that I may be “kept from the paths of the destroyer.” and that I may be “blameless and harmless, a son of God, without rebuke, shining as a light in the world.”

P. If at any time you desire to converse again on this subject, I shall be glad to see you.

B. Sir, I thank you heartily. I will indeed avail myself of this kind offer at my first opportunity, and I hope I shall be grateful for the attention you have paid to my advancement in holiness.

CONVERSATION V.

B. Since I saw you last, I have been in various states of mind; and I think it will prove a blessing to me if you will give me a little advice, and answer me a few questions.

P. You may rest assured, that I will keep nothing back which may advance your comfort and salvation. Of what do you wish to be informed?

B. At present my soul is happy, and pursuing after all the mind that was in Christ

Jesus ; but I have many conflicts with Satan respecting full salvation. I have met with some things which I did not expect ; and with others, concerning which, though they were not unexpected, I had formed a wrong estimate. These have more than once brought me to the point of giving up my confidence : hitherto, however, I have held it fast, and I hope to do so to the end.

P. I suppose you have been comparing yourself with some who, having walked for a time in this Christian liberty, are become much more established in it than yourself. If you have done so, it is no wonder that you have been sorely tempted. You are as yet only in an infant state, compared with what you will be if you persevere. After we are cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, we are then to PERFECT HOLINESS in the fear of God ; to be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ; to be ROOTED and BUILT up in him, and STABLISHED in the faith : and to be FILLED with all the FULNESS of God. Therefore, if you should see others more advanced in the divine life than yourself, you must not give up what you have received ; but be encouraged to expect the same, or even more, from the hand of your beneficent Redeemer.

B. You are right in the conjecture. I have thought too meanly of my blessings, by comparing myself with others. I ought to have been more frequent at the throne of

grace, when I saw the possibility of receiving greater things; and in future I intend to observe that method.

P. What questions, then, do you wish me to answer?

B. I have lately had different kinds of fear in my heart; and you may remember it is said, that "perfect love casteth out fear;" and "he that feareth is not made perfect in love." How shall I reconcile this with my own experience?

P. You must take care not to draw conclusions too hastily respecting a state of entire sanctification; for if you should unadvisedly give up your confidence, as I have before observed, you will certainly bring yourself into darkness, and lose many of your comforts. That the Apostle in those words does not mean every kind of fear, is sufficiently plain. None can doubt that our Lord was possessed of perfect love; and yet he prayed, as in an agony, that the cup might pass from him; "and was heard in that he feared." Probably, therefore, St. John meant, that when our love is made perfect, we shall not be afraid of acknowledging to the world that we are the followers of the Lamb of God, whatever may be the consequence; or, that all painful apprehensions of the threatened judgments of God are removed from the mind, when love dwells there and has the dominion.

It is not, then, inconsistent with this state, that we should be sometimes troubled with

some kinds of fear. The approach of danger, weakness of the nervous system, unexpected occurrences, a change of circumstances, &c., may suddenly come upon us, and cause a momentary alarm, while the pure intention to please God may be as strong as ever.

The natural constitutions of mankind greatly differ from one another. Some, who are altogether destitute of religion, are bold and intrepid; while others, who walk in the "ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless," are timid, and easily fluttered with almost every new thing. Yea, there is reason to believe that many confound the natural and innocent love of life, given us for the preservation of our being, with the fear of death; and perhaps you may have known some of the servants of God drag on heavily by reason of this mistake, till cast on the last bed of affliction, when this principle, being no longer necessary, has been suspended. They have then lifted up their hands, and left the world in holy triumph, without the least disturbance from doubt or fear.

B. This is very reasonable and satisfactory. I wish to know, in the next place, whether I ought to have looked for constant joy?

P. Some have expected a state next to rapture; in this, however, they have often been disappointed. Joy is indeed a fruit of the Spirit; and we are accordingly com-

manded to rejoice; St. Paul could rejoice in tribulation; and our Lord has bid us ask, that our joy may be full. These expressions certainly denote a state of great and substantial happiness; yet not the ecstasy some have imagined. The most holy are not exempt from the common ills of life. The road to heaven lies through the vale of tears. Some excellent men, of whom it is said "the world was not worthy," were destitute, afflicted, tormented. These were among the ancient worthies; and still greater numbers under the Christian dispensation, though filled with a larger measure of the Spirit, have suffered yet more abundantly. While the Christian has so many trials and so many enemies to encounter, the course of his joys will always be liable to interruption. If there were nothing else to disturb it than the dishonour done to God by wicked men, that would be sufficient. How many have said, like the Psalmist, when he beheld the abounding of iniquity, "My heart is sore pained within me: rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law!" St. Paul said that he had continual sorrow in his heart, occasioned by the unbelief and obstinacy of his countrymen.

Though I have thus spoken, I would observe that, as we increase in the knowledge and love of God, we shall attain to much greater assurance of his gracious designs towards us, and shall find in our trials much greater support afforded. We may then,

reasonably conclude, that as we get more of the divine nature, there will be cause for much greater rejoicing.

B. Another thing I expected in this state was, much warmer zeal and greater activity than I generally found. What is your opinion of this defect?

P. Flatness and dulness in the service of God are very unpleasant to the Christian. When these unwelcome visitants trouble him, they make him almost ready to think that he has mistaken his true condition. The service he offers is so very limited when compared with that of the Psalmist, who could say, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," and exhibits so little sympathy with that observation of the Apostle, "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing," that he would be discouraged, if his "conscience" did not bear him "witness in the Holy Ghost," that he aims to do "the will of God from the heart." This may arise from a degree of unfaithfulness in the use of our talents: in that case, more watchfulness and humility are requisite. The mind, however, may be thus depressed by various other causes; such as, a natural and unconquerable lethargic state of body, excessive labour, providential interruptions to secret devotion not rightly improved, pressure of business, travelling, company, afflictions, &c. These circumstances may be innocent in themselves, and yet occasionally damp the holy fire. It requires frequent exercises of faith,

and much wisdom, to order our steps aright : nevertheless, by the renewings of the Holy Ghost, we may in the end prove victorious.

Leading too close and sedentary a life has the same effect. It frequently happens that very studious persons are not the most lively. They spend too much time upon comparatively unimportant subjects, or the increasing of their knowledge in things not immediate by tending to the glory of God and the edification of others, to which every man of God should strictly attend, according to his ability. All was dross in the estimation of the Apostle, but the knowledge of his crucified Lord ; by which the world was crucified to him, and he to the world. The Spirit of Truth draws us to God for the fire of divine love, and then, as it were, repels us from him to burn and shine in the world ; or, in other words, it is exceedingly difficult to preserve life and fervency of spirit, without proportionable activity in the promotion of religion among men. Lay out yourself, then, my friend, for the good of others, especially for the salvation of their souls ; and while you are aiming at this, the Lord will cause your zeal to increase, and fill your heart with the choicest blessings of his kingdom.

B. I find the more my love to God increases, the more I desire the salvation and happiness of my fellow-creatures. O that I may at last, unworthy as I am, look

round me in heaven, and see some there who shall have obtained that blessedness by my instrumentality! But, not to detain you longer than necessary, are not wandering thoughts rather inconsistent with entire sanctification?

P. If by wandering thoughts you mean thoughts that sometimes intrude themselves upon us when engaged in the service of God, and divert our minds from him, I think not. It is indeed the will of God that we should wait upon him without distraction. Many enjoy this salvation in an eminent degree, and, no doubt, it is a privilege belonging to the pure in heart: but it is not always to be expected without an extraordinary degree of grace, and perhaps not always then; as, for example, during a paroxysm of pain, whether bodily or mental. We ought to remember that whatever employs the intellect, engenders thought. All our temptations do the same. All we see, hear, or do, has the same tendency. Still, under all these circumstances, we may preserve a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man. Should we be thus troubled, we must not renounce what the Lord has done for us. This is the very point to which our arch-enemy would bring us. Let us remember, it is promised that the Lord will keep us in perfect peace, if our minds are stayed upon him; and the things which we heartily renounce for his sake, will never be imputed to us for iniquity. Prudently oppose whatever does not tend to

God with that which does, and you shall still go on from conquering to conquer.

B. I think you observed, that the fruit of holiness always accompanies the witness, of the Spirit; or, in other words, that I must look for the fruit, as well as the witness of sanctification. Now, in some severe exercises of mind, it seemed to me that no fruit remained; nor, from the nature of my temptations, had I either time or ability to look for it. The Spirit, however, still bore his testimony, though not always with the same degree of evidence, that I stood accepted in his sight.

P. I am glad you have mentioned this circumstance; for this is the very place where many give up their confidence in the all-purifying blood of Christ. There is no necessity for this; and it arises from a want of distinguishing between sin and the natural feelings and temptation. For instance, I may receive some unexpected unkindness: in this case, I may be pained and grieved. In the same moment, I may be tempted to retaliate. I put it from me. It returns again and again. I still resist, and at last my victory is complete. During the agitation of my mind, I continue to exercise faith, and have the witness in myself; and when the calm succeeds, I sensibly feel that, by overcoming, I have gained much more grace and happiness. In these spiritual conflicts, the Christian does not always find the same cause for triumph. In some of

them he barely conquers, in others he is more than conqueror; but, admitting that he conquers at all, he is obliged, on a close survey, thankfully to confess, that though he seemed to have had neither peace nor love, nor any of the fruit of the Spirit, left, except an unshaken confidence in God, great grace was upon him; and to rejoice, that throughout the conflict he was divinely supported.

But supposing that, by some sudden temptation, or otherwise, you should be hurried into your former natural disposition, and find that by trifling, unguarded expressions, boasting, complaining, &c. you have grieved the Holy Spirit; it does not at all follow, that, because you have slipped down, all your bones are broken, or that by one such transgression the whole body of sin has returned into your soul. No degree of piety destroys our free agency; and, as we here know but in part, we are often pressed down with the corruptible body, and few get as much established in grace as they should do: it is not at all surprising that the mind should at times be crushed and baffled by the misrepresentations, urgings, and repeated attacks of our malicious adversary and his agents.

On such an occasion, fall down before God in deep humiliation, and, without attempting to extenuate or cover your offence, sue for pardon through the infinite merit of the Lord Jesus. Do not stop looking at your unfaithfulness, nor suffer fear or shame

to prevent your immediate return to God. Fly to the blood of sprinkling. Bewail your weaknesses, and pray for renewed tokens of his favour. Remember St. John's words: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that *ye sin not*. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

While you thus stand reprov'd for your fault, be encouraged by divine goodness still to proceed in the path of duty. Make fresh offers of yourself to God; and run with increased vigour the race set before you. "That blood which makes the wounded whole," will certainly heal you: and by stronger acts of faith you will receive greater strength to preserve you in future. Beware of reasoning yourself into discouragement; and as soon as the Comforter returns and witnesses to your heart, praise him with unfeigned lips, and continue to rejoice in his full salvation.

B. What would you advise me to do, that I may be fully established in this liberty?

P. This is a very important question: I will therefore enlarge a little upon it; and, trusting that you will not forget what may be advanced, I shall then take my leave.

1. If you would be established in Christian holiness, it will be necessary for you to believe, without wavering, the love of God

towards you in Jesus Christ. "We have known," said the beloved disciple, "and believed, the love that God hath to us; for God is love." Frequently meditate upon the price paid for your redemption; the long-continued efforts of the Spirit, to bring you from the ways of sin; the blessings you have received, and are every hour receiving from above, and the prospects before you. Consider these things, as the Spirit may lead you; and then ask yourself, What am I, or what my father's house, that thou art so mindful of such an unworthy creature? Look at his condescension and beneficence till you are ashamed to doubt. It is He that hath wrought this work of sanctification in your soul, and it is his good pleasure to bring you to his everlasting kingdom. As long as you firmly believe this, no fear can come near to harm you. While you see and know that the Lord, with his "great and strong sword," rises against the "piercing, crooked serpent," and against all your enemies, from the great love wherewith he loveth you, nothing can make you afraid. And the stronger your confidence is in Him, the better will he be pleased with you and your services.

2. As you must thus, believe in what the Lord has wrought in you, if you would not be robbed of it; so you must strive to live every moment by faith in your crucified Redeemer for what you want. "The life which I now live in the flesh," said St. Paul,

“I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Christ is the proper object of your faith. All your blessings are derived from him, and faith must be considered as the hand that receives them. Your soul must feed upon him; you must spiritually eat his flesh, and drink his blood. Without it there can be no increase of spiritual life. If you would receive the benefits of his merit and intercession, it must be by faith. All the advantages arising from the offices he has taken upon himself for you must be obtained in the same way. Hence you see the necessity of continually looking at Jesus. By faith the ancient worthies obtained the promises of their dispensation; and by faith you must expect the accomplishment of all the promises of the new covenant. By faith you must overcome the world, quench the fiery darts of the devil, and put to flight the temptations, sins, and vanities which surround you. Faith that works by love is the spring of obedience. It will enable you to give up your all to God, and to expect all from him. It will deliver you from anxious thoughts concerning futurity: you will be assisted to cast your care upon him, and in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make your requests known to him; and his peace, which passeth understanding, shall keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. By faith you have access to the grace in which you now stand; and every fresh

supply must be obtained in the same way. In short, faith is an excellent gift of God; and, if it be scripturally used, cannot be used too much. Though I have spoken thus highly of faith, I am no Antinomian: on the contrary, I exceedingly dislike Antinomianism. That sets obedience aside; whereas what is here recommended is productive of all good works. Live, then, by *the moment* in Him who is "the Truth, the Life, and the Way;" and you shall prove the faithfulness of God, and be strengthened for every good word and work. The faith that produces this, gives all the honour to Him to whom it is due, and takes nothing to itself; which appears to be the reason why the Lord puts such honour upon it. He that thus believes shall never be confounded. Though at first his appearance may be only as the dawning of the day, he soon shall be as "the sun when he goeth forth in his might."

3. Frequently exercise yourself in *particular* acts of faith, especially in seasons of trial and temptation. If you have no better method, use the following:—"Thou art the Almighty God, the Creator of all things. Thou hast formed me for thy praise and I am thine. Thou preservest my life, and multipliest thy blessings upon me. Thine eye is continually upon me, and thy hand is stretched out in my defence. Thou wilt not suffer any harm to approach me. I will trust in thee, and not be afraid. Thou, O

Jesus, art my Saviour, my Redeemer, my all. Thou hast died for me. Thy blood is sprinkled in its power and virtue on my heart. It cleanses me from all sin, and gives me boldness at the throne of grace. Thou hast united me to thyself. I have seen and shall still see thy glory. Thou hast conquered my soul with thy love. I am overcome with thy goodness. My heart melts, and is deeply affected with thy kindnesses. Thy Spirit dwells in my soul, diffusing its refreshing influences through all my powers. Thou wilt fulfil thy promises, and make good all thy word to me. Thou wilt be with me in the fire and in the water. Thou wilt bring me to the wealthy place. Thou wilt make my bed in my sicknesses. Through thee I shall triumph in death. Thou wilt open for me the everlasting gates, and receive me to thyself, where I shall behold thy beauty, and from the overflowing and ever-flowing fountain of felicity, drink in the joys of glorified spirits. Thou wilt unite me to the church of the first-born who are written in heaven; and with them I shall praise thee without weariness, and without end."—I have set down this form for your assistance; but I would have you enlarge upon it as much as you can. Take in every thing, whether great or small, in which you are interested. Such exercises are excellent antidotes to doubt, fear, or suspense, and most powerful methods of increasing thankfulness to God.

4. Preserve in your mind a rooted aversion to every kind of sin. It cannot promote either your happiness or the glory of God.

It was sin that brought disorder into the works of God, and filled the creation with groans and sorrow.

It was this that sullied the glory, destroyed the liberty, and blasted the joys of angels. It was this that filled them with pain and restlessness, and laid them under the curse of God; in which state they must remain, till the decision of the last day shall determine the degrees of their intolerable and everlasting torments; and these torments, it is probable, will be increased by every attempt which they have made to seduce mankind into rebellion.

It is sin that has already brought myriads of our fellow-creatures into remediless destruction, and which is still plunging thousands more into the same inexpressibly dreadful situation.

What but sin could have forced such an astonishing expression from the lips of Jehovah, as that which occurs in Gen. vi. 6? —“It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart; and he said, I will destroy man whom I have made,” &c.

It is for this alone that man is banished from his God; it is only sin that can prevent his admission into the everlasting mansions.

This is the fruitful source of all our disquietude, discord, and afflictions; and if we have found, in yielding to it, a momentary gratification, has it not afterward stung like an adder?

You are not ignorant of this; but the more clearly you see the evil that flows from sin, and the blessedness that flows from pure religion, the more you will shun the former, and desire the latter, which must certainly tend to the establishing of your soul in the grace of God.

5. Guard against lightness and trifling, and cultivate a spirit of seriousness in your general deportment. You must serve the Lord with humility, fervency, and gladness of heart; for where these harmonize, cheerfulness is preserved without any danger of its degenerating into levity. Lightness of carriage and behaviour, relating ludicrous stories, immoderate or frequent laughter, satirical remarks, &c., injure the spirit of devotion, produce barrenness of soul, and greatly lessen a man's influence in the church. While he creates smiles in others, he causes leanness in his own soul, and must, on reflection, mourn over his weakness. Let the concerns of eternity, and the solemn things of religion, fill your thoughts, and they will preserve you from this too common and disregarded mischief. Rejoice as though you rejoiced not, and always be mindful of that word, "*Thou, God, seest me.*" I am not now recommending either morose-

ness or melancholy; these being as wide of the point as levity or trifling. I am recommending the habituating of yourself to that disposition of heart which you preserve in your secret approaches to the throne of your heavenly Father. Keep this in view, and your seriousness will be crowned with the happiest effects, both to yourself and-others.

6. Endeavour to retain a grateful sense of the mercies of God. It well becomes the Christian to be thankful. Let this incense be scattered with a liberal hand on all your sacrifices. Whatever benefits have been bestowed, or may be bestowed upon you, let them be acknowledged with praise and thanksgiving. While fighting the battles of the Lord with his two-edged sword in your hand, the high praises of God should be in your mouth. Satan abhors the praises of God; and the most powerful temptation is generally broken by giving glory to God in affectionate praise. The thankful soul is always safe and happy. O then, "sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises to your King, sing praises; for God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with *understanding*;" and thus imitate the life and gratitude of angelic beings.

7. Be careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit, by which you are sealed to the day of redemption. The more he has done for you, the more studious you should be to please him. You should attend to every command, and observe every duty. The least violation

of the law of love, through indifference or neglect, the least rejection or misimprovement of grace, is displeasing to him. An unguarded word, or an improper thought or temper, will be sufficient to bring a cloud upon your mind, weaken your desires after higher attainments, sensibly damp your fervour, and cause you grief and dissatisfaction. There must be close walking with your Lord, if you intend to have the witness that you please him; for he has no pleasure in foolishness. You are a steward, not a proprietor, of your Lord's goods. He will come at last and reckon with you. You are accountable to him for *time, privileges, talents, mercies, helps, and opportunities*. Aim to be altogether a Christian. Follow the Apostle's advice: "Giving *all diligence*, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." Let your eye be single, doing all as unto the Lord; and the Spirit of holiness will not fail to comfort, strengthen, and direct your soul.

8. Study the Scriptures. That blessed book carries its own evidence along with it, and you will find its excellences continually increasing upon your view. You will there trace the characters of the saints, their virtues and defects, and the graces for which they were most eminent. By this means

you may learn how to distrust yourself, and trust to the Lord; how to avoid their weaknesses, and the rocks against which some of them struck; and how to glorify God by the strictest conformity to his will.

There you may trace, through successive ages, the power and providence of God towards his people, the support afforded them in trouble, the deliverances wrought for them, and the miserable end of their enemies and persecutors.

You may there behold the once happy state of man, the effects of his rebellion, the divine procedure in his restoration, together with the innumerable witnesses of his power to save to the uttermost.

In that sacred volume, you may see every thing necessary to guide both your faith and practice.

There the precious promises of your faithful God are registered for your comfort, with many a glorious view of the almighty Promiser.

In this unsullied mirror, a steady faith may apprehend the distant splendours of the everlasting habitations; and, for the quickening of your diligence, it affords a view of the infernal pit, the abode of devils and of all that denied "the Lord that bought them," or "received his grace in vain."

Your Lord has commanded you to search the Scriptures. They are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith in him. They were given "by inspiration of God,

and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Whatever books you read, let the Bible be one. Meditate therein, till its end is answered in your complete salvation.

9. Beware of paying too much attention to dreams, impulses, and impressions. Some of these, it must be acknowledged, have been monitory, and therefore they are not always to be disregarded; but, in every affair, consult your reason, and the openings of Providence. If these be not clear, search the Scriptures; and if they should yield no direction in the particular cases, take the advice of your Christian friends, which, after importunate prayer to the Lord for his guidance, you will be justified in following. But you must always remember, that if a hundred ways be presented to you, that should be followed which is most for the glory of God.

10. Endeavour to be watchful and recollected. You are a Christian. Christ is your master. Angels minister unto you. Your aim is towards heaven; yet the devil will prevent you if he can. In order to overcome all the obstacles which he may interpose, let the end of your existence be always in your view. Consider that your soul is immortal, and that time is chiefly valuable not as affording you an opportunity for sensual indulgence, or even

for the higher enjoyments of the mind, but as being the day of probation mercifully accorded to you, that you may determine whether you will spend a never-ending existence in the presence of angels and of God, or among the unhappy spirits that inhabit the lake of fire. Between these you have already made your choice; shape, then, your course accordingly. Follow in the path of your Saviour; lean not to your own understanding; cry out for help betimes in every difficulty; and be assured that the "high Hand" which brought the children of Israel through the wilderness, and over the sea, into the promised land, will lead you safely through all your future course, be it long or short, rough or smooth, to the "city that hath foundations."

11. Prepare for opposition. This you may expect, not only from devils and bad men, but even from some that are good. The opinions of the best men are so various, that our best intentions are liable to objection. The zealous may think us too cold; while the lukewarm and the formalist may condemn us as too hot. Should it be your lot, bear rather than dispute. If your aim be to "please men, you cannot be the servant of Christ." Always do what you believe is right, and leave the event to God. It is not he that commendeth himself, nor he that is commended by others, that is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth.

12. Preserve true simplicity in all your

actions. Aim, if I may so express it, to be *yoursclf* upon all occasions. This will greatly tend to increase your sincerity, and to preserve you from flattery and flatterers. "Our rejoicing is this," said the Apostle, "the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."

13. Set a good example to all around you. Regularly attend the house of God, and preserve his worship in your family. Diligently wait upon him in all his ordinances, always endeavouring to be present at their commencement, and to show by your devout behaviour that you are a true worshipper of the King of Glory. Let your house be well regulated. Be neat and plain in your dress, and industrious in your calling. Pay a special regard to the sanctity of the Lord's day, avoiding as much as possible every thing of a secular nature. Be circumspect. Be careful of your word and promise. Mind little things. Remember, he who is regardless of little things, will fall by little and little. In short, be you "an example to believers" (whose eyes will now be upon you) "*in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*" The Lord looketh on the heart, but men will know you only by your fruit.

14. Let your passions and affections, with all the powers of your mind, be duly regulated by the word and Spirit of God. This

is a lesson you have daily to learn. As adverse winds call forth the constant exertions and skill of the pilot, that he may attain the port; so the various trials of life should call forth the utmost endeavours of the Christian, that nothing may prevent his admission into the haven of eternal rest. Without care, how easily we might be over-set by an excess of grief, by inordinate affection, by the fertility of the imagination, by curiosity, &c. But if we constantly submit ourselves to the operation of divine grace, it will so harmonize and proportion every faculty and feeling to the rest, that we shall be like vessels with a true ballast, which hold their heads well in the water, and preserve a steady direct course to the place of their destination.

15. Study to improve afflictive dispensations. Remember that "affliction cometh not forth of the dust," all being sent by Divine Providence for wise and salutary purposes. Be not, then, cast down and dispirited in the time of trouble. Do not forget that God is your refuge, a present help in trouble, and that all things are working together for your good. By afflictions, you will learn how little can be expected from the world; how valuable grace is now, and how much more so it will be when your heart and flesh begin to fail. They will also teach you to sympathize with others who are in similar circumstances. They will lead you to contemplate with greater

satisfaction that rest which remains for the people of God ; and to rejoice in the knowledge that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.

In particular seasons of depression or pain, when you feel your soul indisposed for religious exercises, do not suffer yourself to be robbed of your confidence by drawing improper conclusions from your present feelings. Leave yourself in the Lord's hands, constantly saying, "Thy will be done."

Contentment and resignation are difficult both to learn and to practise ; but O ! how precious in the sight of the Lord are those who overcome the difficulty ! After they have "suffered awhile," he will make them "perfect," he will "stablish, strengthen, settle them."

16. Consider your Lord's words, "He that will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." By this you see, that the will of God, and the glory of his name, must, in your view, outweigh every other consideration. You must then beware of self-pleasing, self-seeking, self-exaltation, self-indulgence, voluntary humility, &c. Grace, not nature, must have the dominion over you.

Beware of shunning the cross. If your heart be right, the Spirit of holiness will point out your work. Whatever it may be, do it : whether it be bearing a public testimony for your God, reproving sin, visiting

the sick, acting in public, speaking of and recommending religion to your relations or others, bearing with their frowardness and lightness, opposing fashionable vices and follies, or showing yourself faithful and fearless among worldly men, however great, wise, or respectable. Strive to follow Jesus till you “come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

17. Above all things, prize union and fellowship with God and his people. This is one of the highest privileges we are called to enjoy, either on earth or in heaven. The language used by our Lord on this subject is very remarkable, if we consider the vast distance that exists between the infinite and eternal Being, and his finite and dependent creatures. This will appear by the gracious words which proceeded from his lips: “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, [Apostles,] that they may be one as we are;—that they [believers in general] all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:—and the glory thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”—How intimate in its nature, and how important in its results, is this union! It is represented by the connexion between the branches springing from and supported by the vine; the different mate-

rials of a building sustained and held together by the foundation on which it is erected; and the various members of the human body, all receiving virtue and direction from the head. Here, Christ is the VINE, the FOUNDATION, and the HEAD; and believers the BRANCHES, the BUILDING, and the MEMBERS.

To speak first of our union and fellowship with God. We know exceedingly little of his nature, or the manner in which he has access to our minds; yet we are sensible of his presence with us, by his gracious influences and operations; for "that he is nigh, his wondrous works declare," and we can worship and glorify him as a present God. Take an instance of this in our devotional exercises. There are seasons in which we feel that he is *waiting* to be gracious, and by faith we readily apprehend him, and behold his glories; it seems as if

"Th' invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye."

We are awed by the greatness of his majesty, yet not terrified; are abashed before him, but not confounded; distance vanishes, and still we adore and reverence him. He fills our minds with serenity; diffuses joy through all our powers; discovers what he has wrought in us by his Spirit, and enables us to exclaim with assurance, "This God is our God, and he will be our guide unto death." We lament our past unfaithfulness, and wonder at his patience and long-suffering; while he speaks to our hearts, and says, "I

will have mercy on whom I will have mercy ; and I will have mercy upon you ; I will pardon those whom I reserve. I have loved you with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you. Children, all that I have is yours." In all this display of grace, we feel no self-exaltation ; selfishness is extinguished, and that sweet simplicity produced which makes us

" All praise, all meekness, and all love."

We are now on the mount, and say, " It is good to be here." The graces which have been planted in us are called into vigorous exercise ; our *faith* apprehends the Saviour in all his offices, and claims through his merit the promises in all their fulness ; our *love* causes us to prefer the fellowship of the Father and his beloved Son, with the communion of the Holy Ghost, to all the fellowships and friendships of the world ; and as he makes his divine perfections pass before us, all our other graces are in like manner excited. We envy no worldling his enjoyments ; we sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, delighted with our present portion and future prospects, while heaven seems hid from us only by a very thin veil. With the sweet Singer in our Israel, we feelingly say,

" Take my soul and body's powers ;
Take my memory, mind, and will ;
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart ;—but make it new !"

being desirous of that daily renewing of the Holy Ghost, by which we are to be "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

And as it respects our union with his people, we see that it is the will of our Redeemer, that we should be so perfectly one as not to be distinguished by nation, condition, or sex; for among those who "have put on Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; but we are all one in him: there is one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all." Now, as we cannot come to the knowledge of all the faithful followers of Christ, we must content ourselves with a hearty good-will to all in general; but have a special regard for those who we believe are become one spirit with the Lord. We must think favourably of them, and speak kindly and affectionately to them. We must sympathize with them in their troubles; relieve them in their distresses; make supplication for them at the throne of grace, and rejoice to meet them there. We ought never to forsake them on account of the persecutions they meet with; the conduct of false brethren; or any supposed slight, or even grievous offence, they may offer us. We should seek their prosperity, and make them our companions; bear with their weaknesses, and cover their

ailings, as far as we can with a good conscience. The language of our heart and tongue should be, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God;" and we should preserve our union with them till death shall for a season dissolve those bonds, which will in heaven be riveted for eternity.

And what but the holiness recommended in these conversations can effect this two fold union? Holiness is the soul's costly dress, its finest embellishment, the wedding garment, the white robe, the clothing of wrought gold, the raiment of needlework; it is the believer's strongest anchor, his easiest pillow in health or sickness, the antidote of death, and is crowned with an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

It is, in short, as a pious and judicious writer observes, "the jewel in the crown, the diamond in the ring, the embroidering of the garment, the enamel of nature, the lustre of our gifts, and the perfection of the whole man. It is the beauty of families, the strength of cities, the bulwarks of a nation, the ornament of all societies, the crown of the church militant, and the glory of the church triumphant. It is the splendour of angels, and the glory of God, who is GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS.

"It is the scope of all ordinances, the meaning of all providences, the errand of Ministers, and the interest of the people. In a word, it is the sum of all religion; so that he who pretends to religion, and shall disdain

the title of saint or holy one, is an impostor or idiot."

18. Be always ready for your departure. You are only a passenger through this world. Heaven is your home, and your face should be always towards it. You are not permitted to know *how*, or *where*, or *when*, your Lord will call for you. Let your loins, then, be always girt, your lamp always burning, and yourself in readiness for the heavenly Bridegroom. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching; for he shall be put in possession of "the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Then, if you thus act, with all the redeemed of the Lord, you shall be crowned with everlasting joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

On a survey of the whole, we may justly say, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,—and it doth not yet appear, what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

I have thus endeavoured to give you a short view of the great and glorious truth, that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin: and that you and I may experience the full virtue of it all our days, is, and shall be, my most fervent and hearty prayer.

THE END.

HYMN.

Fountain of life and all my joy,
 Jesus thy mercies I embrace;
 The breath thou givest, for thee employ,
 And wait to taste thy perfect grace:
 No more forsaken and forlorn,
 I bless the day that I was born!

Preserv'd through faith, by power divine,
 A miracle of grace I stand!
 I prove the strength of Jesus mine!
 Jesus upheld by thy right-hand,
 Though in my flesh I feel the thorn,
 I bless the day that I was born.

Weary of life, through inbred sin
 I was, but now defy its power:
 When as a flood the foe comes in,
 My soul is more than conqueror:
 I tread him down with holy scorn,
 And bless the day that I was born.

Come Lord, and make me pure within,
 And let me now be fill'd with God!
 Live to declare I'm sav'd from sin:
 And if I seal the truth with blood,
 My soul from out the body torn,
 Shall bless the day that I was born!

HYMN.

JESUS, thy boundless love to me
 No thought can reach, no tongue declare ;
 O knit my thankful heart to thee,
 And reign without a rival there !
 Thine wholly, thine alone I am ;
 Be thou alone my constant flame.

O grant that nothing in my soul
 May dwell, but thy pure love alone !
 O may thy love possess me whole,
 My joy, my treasure, and my crown !
 Strange flames far from my heart remove ;
 My every act, word, thought, be love.

O Love how cheering is thy ray !
 All pain before thy presence flies ;
 Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
 Where'er thy healing beams arise ;
 O Jesus, nothing may I see,
 Nothing desire or seek but thee !

Unwearied may I this pursue,
 Dauntless to the high prize aspire ;
 Hourly within my soul renew
 This holy flame, this heavenly fire :
 And day and night be all my care
 To guard the sacred treasure there.



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